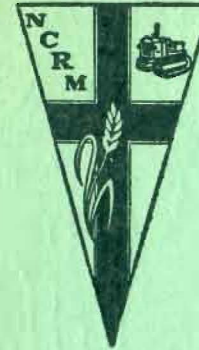


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NATIONAL  
RURAL



CATHOLIC  
MOVEMENT

# RURAL LIFE

AUGUST-SEPTEMBER, 1966

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## BISHOP HENSCHKE'S FAREWELL MESSAGE



The retiring Episcopal Chairman, Bishop Henschke (centre), with his successor, Bishop Warren, and Bill Mannes, president Axe Creek Group, which was responsible for the very successful local arrangements.

**About the only reason, or excuse, I have for occupying this position and opening the Convention is that, when the programmes were printed, I was still the Episcopal Chairman. I am no longer that, and in a few moments I will have the privilege of introducing my successor.**

I feel that I have given to the Rural Movement all that I possibly can; and, with increasing years and increasing deafness, I am no longer able to give that encouragement to which it is entitled. I have been trying to resign for several years and, finally, the Australian bishops have accepted my resignation. The Rural Movement is a Catholic Action movement and, as such, was established by the Hierarchy of Australia. They appointed me to the position, and only they could relieve me of it and appoint my successor.



For the 25 or 26 years the Rural Movement has been in existence it has done wonderful work. We know that of recent years it has suffered a setback; but I can see a second Spring arising.

One thing that pleases me very much is that, at the Bishops' meeting in Sydney last week, one of the bishops said to me that he could always pick out the parishes in his diocese where there had been an active Rural Movement group because the parishioners are different. "They have a different outlook towards the land," he said. "Moreover, their sons and daughters remain on the land."

That was very encouraging, even though the groups had dropped out. What we know is that there are still a number of people who are no longer able to attend group meetings, but who still have the Rural Movement at heart, and are very active in their own fields in promoting the good they learned from it.

### Successor introduced

My successor is Bishop Warren, Auxiliary Bishop of Wilcannia-Forbes. If I alone had had the choice of my successor, I would have chosen him. He was born on the land and has been in a rural diocese all his life; moreover, if industrial experience counts for anything, he has lived for some time in Broken Hill. Coming from a rural diocese, he knows the problems, difficulties and aspirations of people on the land, and I am sure you will find him a very sympathetic and helpful leader.

I have often thought over the past 12 months that it is a pity that the Rural Movement has, as it were, gone into recess in so many dioceses because, as you know, we have been having a very severe drought in Northern N.S.W. Some years ago, conditions in Victoria were somewhat similar. There was a drought in the north of the State, while in the south the season was good. Groups in the south offered to agist stock, and so helped their less fortunate neighbours.

I thought what great work the Rural Movement could have done if it was still functioning as it was then. It would not surprise me if it was Rural Movement members who thought of sending the thousands of tons of fodder; but there was nothing done as a movement. Had the Rural Movement been more widespread in the south of N.S.W. where there was no drought, we would have been able to agist cattle and so help our brothers in the north.

That is one of the tragedies of the "recess" of the Rural Movement. We were not able to give that help. What would we have been able to give had we had someone in the north to contact and find out their needs!

### Another cheerful note

A more cheerful note is that, when I said at the Bishops' meeting that we were in financial difficulties because of reduced membership and increased expenditure, I was asked what we were getting from the Bishops' Fund for Catholic Action. I said we were getting \$500; someone at the meeting proposed that it be raised to \$2000—and that was passed on the spot.

That will be a great help to us in our financial difficulties; it also gives me great encouragement. I made no appeal; I just stated a fact when I was asked a question. The fact that all the bishops agreed to increase the amount shows that they recognise the good work of the Rural Movement.

I realise that one of our big difficulties is keeping group meetings going. It is a big burden for priests to attend these meetings, particularly if there are two or three groups in a parish. I also know that the younger priests, who normally are more active, are in the city parishes. It is easy for them

to attend their meetings because they are working with the youth who are around them. All they need do is go off to the Parish Hall, or wherever the meeting may be, and that is not a great strain.

In the case of the Rural Movement, most meetings are held in country halls. That often means long driving over bad roads in bad weather for the chaplains. Most of these priests are older men, and it is not easy for them.

### Educated laymen are wanted

That brings up the fact that we want more educated laymen in each parish—more laymen who have been thoroughly trained in Catholic Action and in the aims and ideals of the Rural Movement, who will be able to carry on meetings even though a chaplain is not present.

We hear more and more these days about the role of the laity in the Church; they are exhorted to become more and more active. You in the Rural Movement have been active all along, but now you must use more initiative; you must give a lead. That is why we want more educated laymen and women.

You are the Catholic laity, and if the Rural Movement is to flourish two things are needed: First, the educated laity I have spoken of; second more organisers in the dioceses. I made a suggestion to the bishops in Sydney that, for the Rural Movement to flourish in any diocese we must have at least one organiser there; and that will only be possible if there are enough members to pay for the organiser.

I am still going to be interested in the Rural Movement, and I hope it will still flourish in my diocese. We want it to flourish throughout the whole of Australia, because—as I have said on many occasions—it is the only Adult Catholic Action Movement in Australia.

Our prayer is that the land return to Christ and Christ to the land. In other words, there is work for the Rural Movement to do so long as there is one non-Catholic in Australia and so long as any Catholic is under any handicap because of shortages of priests or religious.

There is plenty of work for us to do, not only here in Australia but also in the Philippines and many other places. Under your new leadership and with your new life, I hope the Rural Movement spreads to every diocese throughout Australia and does the invigorating work in the future that it has done in the past.

I thank all of you who have so loyally supported the Rural Movement in the past. In supporting it, you also supported me, because I know that I have not been able to attend conferences or travel much Interstate in the past few years.

So, I think it is high time I did retire. Once again, thanks all of you who have so loyally supported me over the last 25 or 26 years. God bless you now.







## SPIRITUAL TALK

# The People of God and The Lord's Prayer

Monsignor J. H. Larkins,  
National Chaplain.

(By Rt. Rev. Msgr. J. H. Larkins, National Chaplain, N.C.R.M.)

The concept of the Church given to us by the Vatican Council as the People of God, the Holy People of God, the Children of God, still seems strange to some of us. Yet, more than that is contained in the Lord's Prayer which is, or ought to be, the great feature of our devotional life.

In the Old Testament we find much about the People of God and God's protective care for His people. After the fall of our first parents, God was gradually preparing a people who would preserve the knowledge of One True God, and would serve Him according to His law.

At their best they did show a sense of dependence on God, and looked to Him as a protector. Of this we have many beautiful examples. There are frequent references in the sacred books to the Israelites as God's people, the sheep of His flock. The Prophet Isaiah (40.12) tells us how God deals with His people: "Like a shepherd He tends them, gathers up the lambs and carries them to His bosom, helps the ewes in milk on their way."

In the Psalms especially we find beautiful passages, for example: "The Lord is My Shepherd, there is nothing I shall want . . . He guides me along the right path . . . If I should walk in the valley of darkness, no evil shall I fear . . . He made us: We belong to Him. We are His people, the sheep of His flock."

But the Israelites had many reminders of God's majesty and of His punishment of evil-doers, and they stood in so much awe of the Almighty Creator that only on solemn occasions was the name of God pronounced aloud.

When God was about to give the Commandments to Moses, the people were forbidden for three days beforehand to approach Mt. Sinai . . . "Then from the place of the camp, they stood at the bottom of the mount. All Mt. Sinai was in smoke because the Lord had come down upon it in fire, and the smoke arose from it as out of a fire. And all the mount was terrible."

## The Psalmist's warning

The Psalmists gave the warning: "Let the whole earth hold the Lord in dread, let all the inhabitants stand in awe of Him." Then there were grim memories of the Flood, of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah and of later disasters and exiles in foreign lands — all in punishment for sin.

These people could hardly have dared to look at God with the affection of children to a father. This could only come with the fulness of God's revelation in the coming of the Son of God in our human nature: the most wonderful manifestation of God's love for us.

St. John the Evangelist spoke of His coming: "And as many as received Him, He gave them the power to be made sons of God." And again: "By this hath the charity of God appeared to us because God has sent His Only Begotten Son into the world that we may live by Him. In this is charity: not as though we had loved God, but because He hath first loved us."

St. Paul, in the Epistle to the Romans proclaimed: "You have not received the spirit of bondage again in fear, but you have received the spirit of adoption of sons whereby we cry 'Abba', Father."

In the same Epistle, St. Paul tells us that "we are delivered from the servitude of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God", and he frequently argues that it is not the physical descent from Abraham, but the inheritance of the promises and the acceptance of Christ Our Redeemer that makes us truly sons of God.

We take delight in watching little children, who are good, and show their dependence on their parents, and have a sense of security in being 'at home' with their parents. So also should we be, and much more, as we look to our Heavenly Father, whose love for us is immeasurably beyond all the love that can exist between earthly parents and their children.

## In awe of God's majesty

Yet, in our life on earth, we still stand in awe of the majesty of God: so much so that, in the Mass when we recite the Lord's Prayer, we preface it with these words: "Urged by Our Saviour's command, and formed by divine teaching, we dare to say": Our Father Who art in heaven.

We could hardly dare to be on such intimate terms with the Creator of all things unless Our Lord Jesus Christ had come among us and commanded us to speak in this way.

OUR . . . . When we come to consider the Lord's Prayer, we notice first that we say OUR Father. Even when reciting it alone, we don't say "My" Father because we are part of a great family — God's family. And the children of God join with one another and support one another by their union in prayer. Our Lord commands us to approach Our Heavenly Father, not with the reluctance or timidity of a servant approaching a master, but with the eagerness of a child flying to the bosom of his father.

FATHER . . . . God is called Our Father because He made us to His own image. We come from Him, we have even been made sharers in His divine nature. We are His children, He is our Father in heaven, apparently far away now; but we are destined to be in the heavenly home of Our Father when the time comes for Him to call us there. Even now, during this earthly life, having been redeemed by Christ, and restored to the friendship of God, we are far closer to God than the people of olden times.

IN HEAVEN . . . . We speak of God being in Heaven, and immediately we think of the sky at night, of the immensity of the distant parts of God's creation; and we behold the most extensive part of the visible world, undecaying in splendor, excelling all other objects in power, magnitude and beauty, and moving with uniform and harmonious revolution.

We imagine God to be there or beyond, although we know that God is not confined to any space. He is everywhere; but, to fit in with our puny conceptions, God speaks of Himself as dwelling in the heavens. We can also think of heaven as the manifestation of God's glory, with the angels and archangels and all the heavenly spirits and the saints who have passed from this life.



It is there that we shall behold the beatific vision of God, and see and enjoy all things to the full perfection, so that our happiness will be complete, all-satisfying and never-ending. So we speak to God, Our Father, in the realms of His glory and of our eternal happiness.

**HALLOWED . . . .** God's glory should be our chief desire. We know that God's essential glory or perfection cannot be increased; but we pray that the honour given to Him on earth should be like that given to Him in heaven. We pray that His name may be better known and honored by the holiness of our lives, and through the work and prayer of His Church. The name of God includes for us all that we can know and believe about Him. It is manifested by us when we fulfil what Our Lord requires of us; that we love God with our whole heart, and with all our mind and all our strength.

We cannot do this unless we prefer His honour and glory before all else. So, in this prayer, we pray for God's glory before we seek anything for ourselves or for our neighbours. The name of God is the loftiest of all conceptions, the holiest of all words and should elicit from us a continual hymn of praise in our prayers and in our works. The sacred writers of the Old Testament called on all created to give praise to God, and we have much more reason to do so.

**KINGDOM . . . .** God's natural sovereignty over all the world; but we are more concerned with His spiritual reign and dominion. We ask that God may reign in us by sanctifying grace; that He may rule over our intellects, our hearts and our wills by the virtues of Faith, Hope and Charity. We pray that His Church may spread far and wide and may finally triumph in heaven.

In all our works, we must seek first the Kingdom of God and His justice if we expect temporal blessings to be added to us. And we must make use of all the means left to us in the Church to enable us to serve the Kingdom of God. "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord', will enter the Kingdom of Heaven, but he that does the will of my Father in heaven, he shall enter the kingdom."

**THY WILL . . . .** We pray that our wills be made conformable to the divine will; that God's laws and commands be observed by all rational creatures; that He may grant to us the things that are good for us; and that He may refuse to us whatever is contrary to His divine will.

From the beginning, God implanted in us an inborn desire for happiness, but we must learn to know that there is no real happiness without conformity with the will of God. As St. Augustine said: "Thou has made us for Thyself, O Lord, and our hearts cannot rest until they rest in Thee."

We serve God, or should do so, more out of love than from the desire for our own happiness, even eternal happiness. Our Lord Himself set this example for us when he prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane: "Not My will, but Thine be done."

#### **Most perfect of prayers**

In this first part of the most perfect of all prayers, we render our homage to God, and only then do we ask for the things which God's children seek for themselves or others from Our Heavenly Father. This prayer teaches us much, and leads us in the right way to speak of God, Our Heavenly Father.

In all our work in the N.C.R.M. we must keep always in mind that we are working for God, and giving praise to Him in our work and prayer. We must be humble enough to know that we are children, and that we need the constant help of Our Father. And so, from our weakness and our need, we look up and speak frequently, confidently and humbly: "Our Father, Who art in heaven."

We shall find, too, that the way in which the Vatican Council has spoken of the Church and of us is in full conformity with what Christ, Our Lord has given to us in this most perfect of all prayers.

## Bishop Stewart Welcomes Visitors

**"I express my very great happiness at the presence here of Bishop Henschke," the Bishop of Sandhurst (Most Rev. B. D. Stewart, D.D.) said in his welcome to all those who gathered in the Cathedral Hall, Bendigo, for the opening of the Convention.**

"Compliments were paid to him throughout the meeting of the Bishops in Sydney, and many compliments have been paid to him here this morning for the extraordinary interest he has taken in the Rural Movement, the great inspiration he has been to it, and the great work he has done during his twenty-five years of looking after that part of Catholic Action," Bishop Stewart said.

We are intensely grateful to him, and it is with a certain amount of sorrow we welcome him here today, because we know that he will no longer preside over your gatherings; but I hope Bishop Henschke will be at other Conventions — as I am sure he will be if it is at all possible.

It is a great pleasure to welcome the new Episcopal Chairman, Bishop Warren. He has not been so long a Bishop, but he has done great work in the far-flung Diocese of Wilcannia-Forbes. He is, as Bishop Henschke said this morning, well experienced in the problems that beset those folk who are asked to work in lonely places and the fact that he now lives in Broken Hill does not preclude him from knowing your problems and finding answers to them.

I welcome the Fathers who have come to this Convention — some from this diocese, and some from others. Welcome, too, to all the visitors who are the guests of the host body. You can look forward to some good, lively talks and discussions about your various problems.

#### **An Inspiration to the Church**

The love that Pope John preached in his long life and showed to us during his short life as Pope has brought to us in many ways a revitalisation and has been an inspiration to the Church in these days. The great thing that must permeate all our work is that it be done for the love of Christ, the love of God stirring us in all our activities.

We know how insistent St. Paul was on this very thing that, no matter what we did, it must be in over-riding charity and over-riding love of God. If it was not permeated with love, it was "as sounding brass and tinkling cymbals."

That is, perhaps, a very hard lesson to learn. We find that we can become busy about many things, can be lost in the business itself, and so neglect that which should be our spur and inspiration — the driving force of love. It was against that neglect that St. Paul warned us; that without charity good works are nothing.

Sometimes we see people who have no thought of prayer or God at all; yet they are fundamentally good and charitable, anxious to advance worthy causes and help others in distress. All that is good, and we feel that there is a stirring deep in their souls—a love of God that prompts them somehow or other.



## Revelation of God

But we, as Catholics, need no imagination as to the force that should guide us in these things. We have a clear revelation from God Himself that God is love, that we must love God and love our fellow-men in God. In all your studies and all your work, even if they are prosaic at times, you must have in your minds that they are for God and your fellow-men in God.

This is particularly vital in these days when the Church is embattled, and striving to reach the world and bring the world to a knowledge of Christ—bringing the only true happiness to the world, in the Church which Christ has left us.

The lives of the saints are examples of what you should do. We marvel at them and wonder how they could do the things they did while going about their ordinary lives. They were men and women who, as we have been told, "were not afraid to go out in the shower of God's grace without an umbrella". We like the grace of God, but we like it to the measure we decide, not to the measure which is offering.

We must all aim at the highest point of God's grace. We can all fall short of it, as we know we do in our ordinary lives, but we must have that vision if we are to be true apostles of Jesus Christ, true members of the Church in these days of anxiety and crisis; we must work that the Church will be brought to the recognition of those who are seeking an answer and are finding nothing, because they are, as we know, looking in the wrong places.

## Glorious Gift of Faith

The Church is the only place in which men can find the answer, but the only way that answer can be presented to the world is through those who are members of the Church and have received the glorious gift of Faith. St. Thomas Aquinas tells us that the good of one member falls on the whole body; if the cells are healthy and active, then the whole body is healthy and active. If there are devoted cells in the Body of Christ, then the Church can fulfil its mission more effectively; bring others to know it and bring the Gospel — the good news — to those who are "in darkness and the shadow of death."

But, unfortunately, we find ourselves busy about so many things. Unless we have the vision clearly and try to find the right proportion in all that we do, we are in danger of becoming like the tinkling cymbal.

That will be a thought to have in your minds during the Convention when you think of the work you have put your hands to. You have desired to bring Christ to the land and the land to Christ; but perhaps the vision has faded a little over the years and is not as strong as it was when you were first fired with the desire to be an apostle to the countryside around you, to the people among whom your lot is cast.

It is a glorious apostolate, particularly in these days when, as we say, life itself is under fire, when people are anxious for the affluent society, for "the good life", as they call it, and are missing out on the realities. The pleasures of this world make people so jaded; but you have the truth and the truth will make you free; you have the life that came to you in Baptism — a share in God's own life.

Not one of us should judge these people because we are fortunate and they are not; they know not God and Him He has sent—the one necessary truth, as St. John the Evangelist reminds us. You have that, and that is what you should seek to show in your lives.

## The Challenge of the Cross

We know how Christ, being raised up on the Cross, drew all men to Him. He was raised up in a terrible way on the hard wood of the Cross and He died in agony. For nearly two thousand years since that time, men have found

the Cross the only answer to the riddle of life. Despite the strange philosophies emanating from many sources, there remains only one answer—the great challenge of the God man on the Cross.

He will be raised up by you and by me and by all who seek to pattern their lives upon Christ and are not afraid of failure. When the Church in so many places appears to be reeling under the awful weight of punishment it is receiving, we find the strange paradox of the Cross—that the moment of failure is the moment of triumph.

These thoughts may help you in these days if your Rural Movement is to flourish and mean anything to you, to those around you, and to the great Church which, in these days, has again called on the laymen for a special task.

It is not the first time the Church has done that, and it is to the glory of Australia that the call of Catholic Action made by the great Popes of this century has met with such ready response.

The Church demands more these days; it demands even the impossible, though it knows full well that nothing is impossible in the God Who strengthens us. I wish you well and sincerely hope that your deliberations will bring you nearer to Christ and to the Church, and make you realise the important cells you are in the Body of Christ.

## "It is not impossible"

It may be difficult to live up to that vision, but it is not impossible. "Everything is possible in God Who strengthens me," says St. Paul. That is the way we must look at it. We will fall short because of our human weakness; but you have done well in the past; and now with a freshness from the Council so recently ended you will be endowed with that spirit of confidence and of grace so that you will not easily be daunted by the vast tide of evil which threatens to overcome mankind.

So I wish you success in your efforts to bring others to a like mind and to increase this great Apostolate so that Australia, this blessed land in so many ways, will continue under a new and greater blessing — not the blessing that comes from material prosperity, but from sanctity itself.

When the time comes to go before God, please God we will go with full sheaves — a metaphor you country people can understand. You will carry before God not only your own souls saved by the love of Christ, but also bring with you those influenced by your lives, when you in your lives held up Christ to them . . . God bless you in your deliberations.

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# The Constitution on the Church: Its Vision of the Lay Apostolate

(By Rev. Father Peter Little, S.J., Corpus Christi College, Glen Waverley)

**The image the Church is projecting of itself these days is quite simple. Imagine a bishop, in front of him an altar, and on the other side, a group of the laity (plus religious in their midst).**

Listen to the bishop. He is explaining the relevance of the scripture readings to the Mass of the day and to life in today's world.

The people are now singing—in response to the readings and his homily. Now they are all taking part in the offering of sacrifice. Finally, they all communicate in the Eucharist, action again accompanied by singing. There is the Church: people engaged in the sacrificial worship of the Mass.

Think of this as the climax of worship. The Church should also be engaged in public, whole-hearted praises of God—something we still have to develop in this country, as far as the laity are concerned. But the climax is the Mass, and this worship is the height of the "dialogue" with God. He is speaking to the beloved bride of His Son, she to Him. When the Church thinks about herself, this is the image she has, the image she wants every one of us to have. It is a dynamic image, as distinct from a static one; moreover, it is a mystery.

Being a mystery means that God is really present and at work in this worshipping Church, carrying out His plan of salvation. The Father is there in the risen Son. The Son is there, imparting the Holy Spirit to us—to make us listen wholeheartedly to the word of God, to sing the praise of God, to offer sacrifice, to receive the Eucharist fruitfully.

So, especially in this liturgical dialogue, the Holy Spirit is binding us into closer unity with Christ and one another—and so with the Father. These ideas run like major themes through the symphony of Council documents.

## Documents fit into the vision

Now, we can easily see how the nine sections of Chapter IV of the Document on the Church fit into this vision. Here they are, numbered according to the numbers in the document.

(30) The pastors of the Church are so to act as to make all co-operate in the common task with complete unanimity.

(31) The laity are those of the faithful who are engaged in the world—in the world of activities that make up the temporal order. (The temporal order is distinct from the religious-spiritual order—the one we see in that basic image of the worshipping Church and in all the activities directly concerned with it in one way or another). The laity are those in the complex of human relationships—basically, those of family life and those that complete them in the social order.

(32) All in the Church have the same dignity. All have the same action to carry out for the growth of the mystical Body of Christ. The functions differ. The two groups, those with the Divine powers and the rest of the

faithful, are to act in the closest liaison, with an eager, outgoing attitude to each other for the success of the common task. The Lord Christ is brother to the laity; so, therefore, are His bishops.

(33) The laity are meant to direct all their energies to the building up of the Body of Christ and to its coming closer to God in holiness. They are meant to make the worshipping church present and active in the circumstances of their daily lives. Only through each layman, and through laymen together, can the Church exercise its function of being the salt of the earth.

(34) Now this apostolate—in the Church and in the world—can be carried on because the laity share in Christ's threefold dynamic dignity as priest, prophet, king.

Let them think of themselves as marked with Christ's priesthood at Baptism. This enables them to offer themselves to God with Christ when they are offering His Body and Blood at Mass. But notice: they remain as persons permanently offered to God. Everything they do then takes on this aspect of being an offering to God. Their share in the Lord's own priesthood enables Him to act through them all day. Whatever they do and whatever they bear with—on condition they act "in the Spirit" and bear things patiently—all this constitutes one self-offering lived out in the daily round with its variety. Now, because the laity's actions are in the world, the world through them is being consecrated to God . . .

(35) Secondly, this apostolate can be carried on only because the great Prophet, or spokesman of God, namely His own beloved Son, communicates His prophet's or spokesman's mission to all the laity. They are to bear witness to the truth about the reign of the kingdom of God—that kingdom which is actually coming now, but is to come in full power when the Lord appears. Our Lord did this Himself by His whole way of living, but above all by what He said. What He said made clear what He did. Did He feed five thousand? He spoke next day to make it quite clear what He meant.

Life plus speech: that is the pattern. Both are witnessing to the truth. Both manifest the truth. The life and action must be there all the time, the words when it is fitting.

Our Lord wants not only the hierarchy but also the laity to witness to this same kingdom of God. By this witness they are to bring the power of the Gospel right into the complex of relationships their lives are made up of. They are to be radiant with faith, hope and charity—faith in the Gospel, hope in its certain fulfilment, love towards God whose Gospel or Good News it is, and towards the human beings who are sent to hear the Gospel now and be part of its mighty programme.

They must not rest till they have patterned contemporary life in accordance with what is to come.

That is one of the most laconic and richest phrases in any Council document. See it at the end of Paragraph One in Number 35.

## Universe will be transfigured

What is to come? In the future consummation the redeemed human person will have reached full development and be with God, face to face, in loving worship. In the future all such persons will enjoy the ecstatic happiness in the deepest human communion. In the future the earth and the whole universe will be transfigured, just as the human body will be. In the future there will be no evil, no sorrow, no suffering, no lying, except in hell.

All this must be reflected in the structure of secular life. Everything must contribute to the development of persons, to their being able to enjoy communion with one another, to their being able to worship God openly with the utmost joy, to the abolition of evil, sorrow, suffering, lying from earth . . .

So, plan a city. Plan homes that can expand. Plan the "village green" aspect of grouped homes. Plan real centres for communal action—for com-



munion of hearts and minds: primarily centres for communal worship of God and then for other activities of the city. Plan for each local community to contribute to the well-being of the state, of the country, of the world . . .

If this prophetic action is going to succeed, it demands speech—and the moral courage to speak out loud and clear, and moreover, to speak out repeatedly.

Notice a man like Mr. Santamaria. Consider the moral fibre needed to speak out so loudly, clearly and continuously. But the Lord has equipped him to be His witness—first with the seal and power of the Holy Spirit at Confirmation; then with the light of faith in which the world becomes clear; next with the gift of speech.

All these He has given in one way or another to all of us. He is our good Lord; His goodness wants us to make us all sharers in the common task. He does not want it left to a few.

### **Warring against the evil spirits**

Now, this speech in conditions that require moral courage indicates the need to turn continually towards God our Father, in Christ our Lord. It means also continual fronting up to the Evil One and his wicked companions. They act through men who can be duped. So, in warring against the evil ideologies, plans and activities of men, we must be mindful that it is really against the evil spirits we are warring . . .

This apostolate of living and of speaking goes on at the home base primarily. Special grace is given to the husband and wife to be the first witnesses to each other and to their children of what the faith means and of what the love of Christ means. This sort of apostolic family will attract truth-seekers to the light and show up evil for what it is.

It seems that the Council goes out of its way to make sure the laity realise that, even before they are engaged in the high apostolate of Catholic Action, they can and should take part in the work of "evangelising."

This is a word we are all shy of. It is associated in Australia, at least, with what some of the groups of separated brethren do. But "evangelising" means spreading the Good News; it is not the same as "instructing", or the life-long process all should be engaged in of deepening their understanding of the Faith.

Evangelising is the first step. It is the effort to bring the basic Good News about the human unity in Christ's Church to all our fellow men. The same laity ought also to co-operate with one another and the hierarchy for the spread and growth of the kingdom of Christ in the world. Again we see the twin fields of the apostolate—Church and world.

Almost the key point about the lay apostolate is now mentioned: to carry it out with the seriousness that adults bring to almost every other project of any importance, two things are needed—knowledge and the wisdom that comes from loving familiarity with truth . . .

(36) The apostolate is able to be carried on thirdly because we have power from Christ the King. Christ entered into His present position of glory and royal power. He did not actually possess the fulness of the royal power before His sacrifice. Naturally, He could have. He was the Son of God! But He chose to exercise His full power only as the result of, and the reward for, the act of liberation carried out in His sacrifice on the Cross.

Now He rules by double right. He is God's Son and mankind's liberator. He is engaged in extending this power into the race and the universe, to bring them to their respective destinies. He gives the power to us. With it we conquer the enemy within the gates: sin.

### **Free through His power**

We are free men through His power. We can control our irrational impulses—those impulses which lead men to commit the most unspeakable atrocities

and evils in the world: which could lead anyone by the nose were it not for the power of Christ. By this power we are meant to work for the great vision: all men brought to Him, whose service is freedom.

Now this power is, the Council insists, available to the laity. Christ wants to extend His kingdom through the laity as through the hierarchy . . .

Now, this destiny planned for the whole creation means that the laity must give special attention to what creation is, its value and its role in furthering the praises of God by mankind. Another terse and pregnant sentence in Para. 2. I wish I knew all it meant!

The "nature" of the whole creation—in fact, the "intimate nature" of it. What does this mean? Does it mean we should know all about the DNA molecular structure that contains the building code for the body? That we know the details of the organic life in the soil? I think it does; but only because these marvels indicate a basic truth about the whole creation.

This is that creation is a million active and co-ordinated things, filled with an exuberance of activity that over the five billion years of its existence shows a pattern of upsurging progress towards our own appearance on the globe; that our own race now shows clearly a swift converging towards a pattern of global communion.

There is an evolutionary pattern clearly seen as a result of the intimate nature of the creation. Mind you, I am not even mentioning the problem of actual evolution of one thing into another (that completely baffles me) but just the evolutionary pattern that is now crystal clear.

God has made His creation a whole: not a million isolated things, but a universe. It is not static, but teeming with energy: consider the incredible number of offspring living things bring forth. It is man-focussed. We have been here for just a little while in comparison with the earth—at the most, half-a-million years compared to five thousand million years. But it is "all for us" . . .

You see, I am sure, that all this teaching is meant to make us feel the most at home of all men in the world of temporal affairs. We know the secret of the world. It is ours, just as we are Christ's, just as He is God's.

You see, too, how this knowledge is the source of a mighty Christian and lay determination to see that all the good things of the world are so treated and distributed that absolutely all men everywhere benefit from them.

### **Five things are demanded**

This demands five things: work, technical skill, social conditions facilitating the distribution of good things, and animating the whole process, the divine plan that the world is made for all men, plus the Lord's illumination—that all men are His brothers and that the world is to be consumed by His glorious power . . .

Besides this form of apostolate there is another. We are to heal. Human institutions and conditions are meant to assist men to be good. If they have elements inciting men to evil, these elements must be purged out. The media of social communication—that is, TV, radio, press, films, books — should make us better men. If the type of music, film, variety etc., tends to make us sink into a life of instinct, or worse, the healing process is indicated. Everything to do with us human beings should have human values permeating it. What a field for action and for the co-operation of individuals each acting energetically!

The more human the values that breathe through human institutions the easier it is for the word of God to make its entry into the heart; the easier, too, for the Church's resounding appeal and promise of peace to enter the "city of man".

A final warning: Don't confuse! Don't separate! Don't confuse your being a citizen of two peoples. You belong to the people of Australia and you belong to the People of God.



Wherever you are, however, you are one of the Christian people. All you do in the temporal order of Australia must be governed by your belonging to the People of God.

This does not mean that the Church wants to take over society. It means that the Church wants, through her christianised members to be present and at work in society—to be the salt of the earth.

(37) To make this work there must be dialogue between pastor and laity. Laymen should know their rights in this matter of speaking to their brother-pastors. They should know that they are at times obliged to make known to the pastor (the bishop or his priests) their opinion as to what is needed for the good of the Church. This obligation grows with their being well-informed, and competent and with their position in the world. . .

(38) The grand finale is that each layman must think of himself as embodying the fruitful power of the Holy Spirit in himself. He must think of himself as a witness to Christ Himself, risen from the dead and absolutely alive with power. He must think of himself as a sign, a symbol, an embodiment of the Living God—God the Father. . .

No wonder the Church says to her members, especially her laity: "What the soul is in the body, let this be what Christians are in the world."

## The Apostolate of Institutions

(By Mr. J. Tehan, Snr.)

**A Christian Apostolate of Institutions involves co-operation with our separated brethren and also with other men and women of goodwill.**

Perhaps a similarity of ideas is the distinguishing mark of those to whom co-operation is possible.

The Ecumenical Movement has generated an immense amount of goodwill towards us Catholics — for no other reason, perhaps, than because our response has been so much greater than was anticipated. Purely religious bigotry hardly exists today among professing Christians; what hatred there is is mostly racial or ideological — or just plain snobbery. Today, therefore, there is a greater opportunity than ever to secure the co-operation of people of other faiths, and those of none, to rationalise and protect the basic values of our civilisation.

The Apostolate of Institutions has not been a failure. There are worthwhile achievements to its credit and there is greater promise for the future. Not only is there a more favorable atmosphere of goodwill; but there is definitely more goodwill than there used to be. The dangers confronting Australia are more apparent, and perhaps a sense of urgency is being slowly born.

### First moves for Asian aid

The few in the Rural Apostolate were the first to call for an increase in primary production to meet the problem of world hunger. There was

much opposition then, but now this policy is universally accepted. The first moves for Asian Aid — to India in particular — originated from these same people; and they were the first to bring to notice the political and economic dangers of trade with Red China.

It is difficult for us, especially the younger men today, to appreciate the opposition to increased primary production in the post-war years. Perhaps it was that men in positions of power and influence at that time had memories of the "Hungry Thirties," a near-bankrupt agricultural community and a glutted world market — a community where the bountiful harvest was dreaded like the plague.

Australia's own internal expansion, due largely to European migration, had then hardly got under way; the generosity of Marshall Aid had not produced anything like full results; the economic miracle of the European Common Market and the resurgence of a free Japan were far in the future.

But, with the collapse of the wool market in 1958-59, it was found that our principal export industry had been seriously eroded by a big increase in the cost of production; and it seemed that the anti-expansionists might be right. The Australian Wool Growers' and Graziers' Council economist warned that, unless the vicious circle of falling prices and rising costs was stopped, the Australian wool industry would have to be subsidised.

This meant that either the Australian economy would have to be subjected to a long period of deflation to reduce and stabilise costs, or the wool industry would have to receive a price-support subsidy. Both of these courses of action were politically unacceptable, and those Australian farmers who had been thinking of the rapid development of Australian agriculture and of more food for an expanding world population were deeply disturbed.

It was at this point that a Western district soldier-settler named Walker, a man of good Christian outlook, with whom I have co-operated quite a lot, suggested an incentive subsidy for the wool industry. By an "incentive subsidy" he meant a form of help that would stimulate an increase of production, and therefore an increase in gross income, thereby securing a reduction in the nett unit cost of production.

Nobody knew what form this incentive to production should take; but it was felt that it would have to be of special benefit to the high-rainfall areas, which were worst affected at the time, and contained a large number of small producers.

### Bounty on superphosphate

I thought about this for a long time until, quite suddenly, it occurred to me that the restoration of the bounty on superphosphate might be the answer. I took steps to have this made the policy of the Victorian Graziers' Association, and also of the Victorian Country Party. Four years later, it became Government policy, with results you know well — tremendous expansion in pasture development and a great increase in primary production; but its effect as a cost factor is diminishing now.

At the same time, I took up the matter of trade with Red China. At the 1959 Country Party conference in this city, I moved and had carried a resolution that, with regard to trade with Communist countries, Australia's security should be put before the profits to be made by any section of the community. Strange as it may seem, I think that resolution still stands.

Just recently, the Minister for Trade, Mr. McEwen, stated very emphatically that selling wheat to Red China was not the policy of the Commonwealth Government; it was, he said, the policy of the Australian Wheat Board.

Government policy on these sales of wheat has been based on sheer expediency; and, all along the line, the Government has been on the defensive in this matter. It is quite prepared to bask in the reflected glory — if you can call it that — of this trade when things are going well; but it has always been quite ready to get out from under any time things looked like going badly.

This is a great contrast to the position in Canada where wheat sales



to Red China are openly espoused as Government policy, and where there is a trade agreement with China up to July 31, 1969. It goes even further than that. Oliver Hamilton, the man who pioneered this trade, recently told Frederick Nossal, the Toronto journalist, that this trade was something more than an exchange of goods, because it gave both parties the opportunity to discuss matters other than trade. He meant the Vietnam War, Red China's admission to the U.N., and the fate of Taiwan.

This attitude of Hamilton and his Canadian friends is in complete harmony with the Chinese Communists — "economics and politics are indivisible."

In Australia, political realism points to the fact that the Commonwealth Government guarantees the Australian Wheat Board. What political party could retain the wheat electorates in the face of unpaid growers clamoring for their money?

### Government on defensive

At least, we have put the government on the defensive, and by contenting itself to remain on the defensive the Government has — to use a modern phrase — "retained its options". When we consider the furore and the enthusiasm of the early 60's for the unlimited market of 600 million people, starry-eyed as it was, this is no mean achievement by a dedicated minority, a pitifully small handful, but by no means pitiful in themselves.

We are able to keep a powerful political and bureaucratic establishment on the defensive.

Today, when Australian soldiers are fighting and dying in the "war of national liberation", waged by proxy by Red China for the control of South-East Asia, trading with Red China becomes an increasingly erosive moral liability for any Government to carry.

And what of our present trade, even though it is small, with North Vietnam? According to Alan Ramsay, we supply North Vietnam with wheat, flour, chemicals, telephones and some metal manufactures. We do this while there is a war being fought by us and the Americans against the North Vietnamese, until such time as a confederation of free nations can be founded and developed, and has acquired sufficient strength to contain the southward thrust of Red China.

This policy is the key to our survival and the maintenance of it should take precedence over all else. Already we can see the first beginnings of the building of this alliance; and some further steps were taken a week or two ago when the Japanese leaders of the Australia-Japan Businessmen's Association visited Australia.

### Instrument for development

These hard-headed businessmen see in a South-East Asian Community a natural instrument for the economic development of this part of the world . . . And you will remember how, only a few years ago, the idea of a Pacific Confederation was ridiculed and scoffed at as being impracticable.

The Red Chinese have been held up to us for their impeccable honesty. Fidel Castro, for one, wouldn't agree with that! Why shouldn't they have paid for our wheat on or before the due date? This trade has been profitable to them; they have been able to buy subsidised wheat, and by exploiting its use, gain high prices for their own products on the world's markets, thereby getting extra foreign exchange. In addition to that, they have received from Australia a preference, both as to price and credit.

The Red Chinese, however, have far bigger fish to fry than the Australian Wheat Board. They have set their sights on the importation of complete industrial plant, together with the technicians needed to install and maintain this plant, from the capitalists of Western Europe and Japan. These are not cash transactions, except in the case of Japan, where the government-owned Import-Export Bank prohibits the granting of credits for these purposes.

### Helping the Chinese Reds

Seven years to pay is the usual term spoken of in these transactions. Here are some of them: Since 1963, Japan has supplied to Red China two Bri-Nylon plants worth 50 million dollars, and a wire-rolling plant worth 8.4 million dollars. The United Kingdom has supplied an ammonia plant worth 7 million dollars and polypropyl plant valued at the same sum.

Italian firms have supplied two fertiliser plants worth 14 million dollars, a petrol refinery worth 10.6 million dollars, a shale oil refining plant and a tube expanding plant. From West Germany has come an oil-cracking plant worth 12 million dollars; and negotiations are proceeding with a West German firm for the supply of a seamless steel rolling mill, worth 70 million dollars. Austria has supplied a steel-smelting plant for 12.6 to 14 million dollars; and France has supplied an industrial alcohol plant.

These figures may be checked from the "Far Eastern Economic Review" of January, 27, 1966 and April 14, 1966.

The high point of our grain exports to China was reached in 1963 when their value was \$202 million; but a more potentially dangerous development occurred when Sir William Gunn began to show his interest in the Chinese wool market.

According to the "Sydney Morning Herald" (Oct. 31, 1961), there was a strong hint of a Government marketing scheme to sell wool to Red China on hire purchase. Eleven months later, on September 29, 1962, Sir William Gunn stated that Communist China could, in ten years, become Australia's principal market for greasy wool. This statement was followed by Sir William Gunn's visit to Peking, where he was reported to have promised the Chinese a Colombo Plan type of technical assistance; later, Chinese technicians were secretly brought to Australia and trained to process inferior types of wool.

This secrecy indicated that "The Establishment" were on the defensive in this matter. Later on, the Australian Wool Board stupidly allowed its name to be linked with a pro-Communist, anti-American propaganda campaign for the release of known Chinese spies in Brazil.

For this, the Board was attacked in Parliament and by some sections of the Australian Press; the Graziers' Association of Victoria passed a resolution regretting that the board had allowed itself to become involved in this political campaign, and asking that a disclaimer be published.

This was another instance of these people being placed on the defensive; but to place them on the defensive is not enough. It is necessary to open up the alternative, as was done with the campaign to increase primary production.

### Wool gift to India

Recent promising developments have been the gift of wheat to India, the "Milk for India Campaign" and other measures of aid to that country. To my mind, however, the most important of all the developments is the gift of 40 million dollars worth of wool to India, and its associated agreement for economic and technical assistance covering a wide field of metal and wool materials.

This is a sound foundation for increased trade between Australia and India and will contribute to the strengthening of the economies of both countries.

The gift of wool was first advocated by Mr. Young, a Colombo Plan consultant. I helped to publicise his suggestion, speaking of it at many meetings. Finally, the Government caught up with the suggestion. The value of this gift is undoubted. A friend of mine, Mr. Walker, whose name I mentioned earlier, informed me on his return from India that the second largest woollen mill in that country had closed down because it could not get sufficient foreign exchange to purchase wool from abroad.



The task of opening up these alternatives is, however, hampered by the lack of market and economic research. The key to the development of this region seems to lie in Japanese economic co-operation and United States backing. Recently discovered mineral resources will play a great part in this development; so will our export of food and fibre.

Recent developments in Indonesia open up the possibility that we could in time have a friendly next-door neighbour. In this matter, as in others, Japanese co-operation is going to be extremely important.

### Tasks for the future

On the domestic scene, unity of primary producer organisations is the most desirable objective. Perhaps it could be an objective of the Rural Apostolate to bring about and increase tolerance and understanding between primary producers in the different organisations.

Among other tasks are:

- The defence of the family farm, as against the larger type scale of production under the control of company organisations.
- The stimulation and encouragement of co-operatives.
- The securing of justice for the farmer in the matter of capital taxation, i.e., taxation of his land.
- The problem of probate, particularly with regard to the inferior position in which the family farm is placed, as against the company farm, for instance.
- Decentralisation and the growth and stability of country towns and their business and industry.

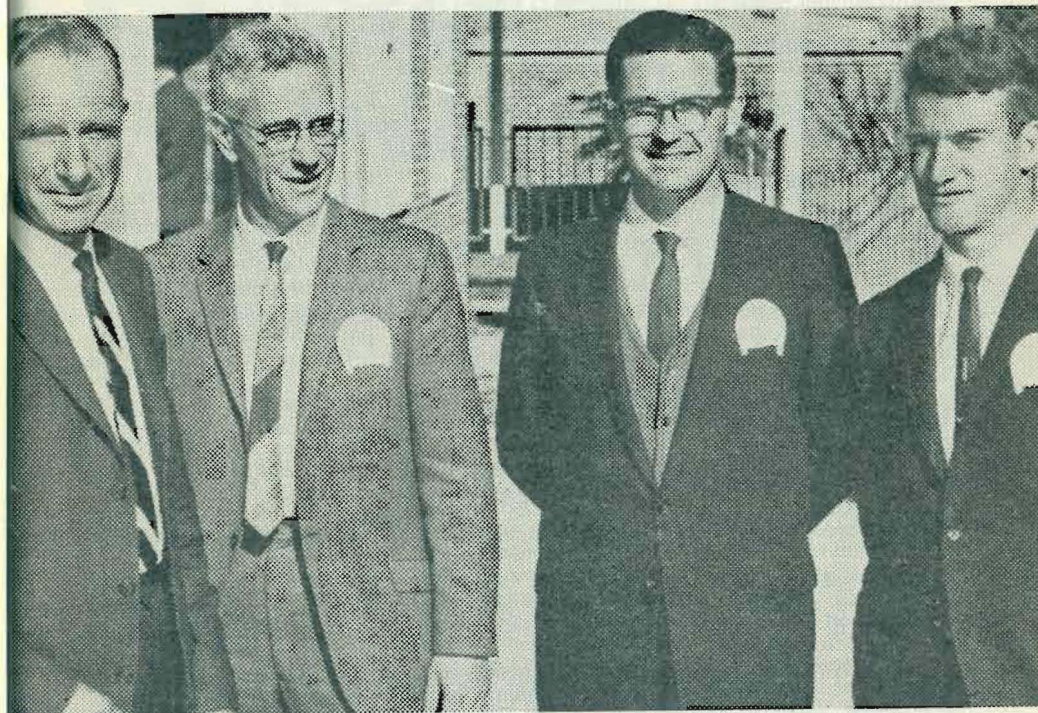
The problems calling for our attention are many and varied. These problems are a challenge to the fundamental principles of our Faith, with its great emphasis on self-sacrifice and charity. Something has already been achieved, in spite of seemingly insuperable obstacles. One thing that has been gained is experience; that experience is available in an organised form for those who are willing to give their time and effort to this necessary work.

Edmund Burke wrote: "All that is necessary for the triumph of evil is that good men do nothing" . . . Surely we cannot allow evil to triumph by our default.



## The Rural Movement in the Riverina

(By Terry Fromholtz, Riverina Organiser)



L. to R.: Mike Howley (N.C.R.M. president); Paul Wild (National organising secretary); Terry Fromholtz (Riverina organiser); Kevin Fitzgibbon (Axe Creek).

In reporting on the activities of the Rural Movement in the Riverina, it is important to first define the area. Geographically, the Riverina — as we know it in the Rural Movement — ignores the Victoria-N.S.W. boundary, and, from a diocesan point of view, it includes the Diocese of Wagga and parts of the dioceses of Canberra-Goulburn, Wilcannia-Forbes, Ballarat and Sandhurst.

A short quote from the recent "Decree on the Laity" from the Vatican Council will, perhaps, bring home more closely how our work is conforming with what the decree recommended. "The laity must take up the renewal of the temporal order as their own special obligation. Led by the light of the Gospel and the mind of the Church and motivated by Christian charity, they must act directly and in a definite way in the temporal sphere."



The work of the Rural Movement in the Riverina covers three different categories: local, national and international. They cannot be separated very easily.

Mangoplah group is an example of local work. It has been active since the formation of the Rural Movement twenty-five years ago; it is a small section of the diocese of Wagga, and although the actual membership has changed, there have been regular group meetings ever since its formation.

Local work generally means taking part in local organisations—Parents' and Citizens' Associations, hall committees, Country Women's Association, Returned Servicemen's League, the United Farmers' and — last but not least — the local football club. This club is very important to a small community, and anyone who wants to have any influence in the community must support the local football club.

I am pin-pointing one particular group to illustrate local work; but every group engages in this, and it is a basic necessity for a group to be in such a position to influence the local community.

### Work in the national sphere

In national work, the best example is the Rural Movement member taking part in his professional or vocational association — a farmer in the United Farmers in N.S.W., or the Victorian Wheat and Woolgrowers' Association; a teacher in the Teachers' Federation, or the like.

We take part and pull our weight in these organisations. One of the main aims of the Rural Movement is to take part in these vocational organisations, because we realise their importance in forming public opinion and in actual policy-making by governments.

We take interest in this field locally; but perhaps more in matters of trade and policy such as migration. These vocational organisations are our most important outlet for policies developed at Conventions such as this.

In international work—which here, again, you cannot separate from local or national work — a good example is Asian Aid. I will deal with that particularly, but before I do, I will say that the other aspect of international work is the Apostolate of Institutions as it affects matters such as overseas trade.

We hear a lot about trade with Communist countries. It is very difficult to do anything about it, but it has always had our attention. However, I will give you a brief example of something a group has been able to do.

The Howlong group tackles the problem of our trade with Communist countries — in particular, our increasing dependence on Communist China for wheat sales — by promoting the idea of increasing trade with India. The basic requirement of trade with India is to give that country the opportunity to buy things. India is short of foreign exchange, and it amounts to being prepared to give her credit to trade with us. This is how we have tried to tackle the problem of our increasing trade dependence on Communist countries.

This is international work that goes beyond Australia even though it is tied up with Australia's interests. It is in this way, too, that we see the policy of support for trade with Japan. The Rural Movement supports this because we realise that if the primary producer does not stand up for this policy, we cannot expect anyone else to. We also argue that Australia depends on its primary production, and the country buying most of our products must get some consideration in our own buying.

These ideas must be spread in the field of public opinion in the organisations to which we belong. It is an important part of our international work.

### Three angles of Asian Aid

Mentioning Asian Aid in detail, we are very pleased with our efforts. We have approached this from three different angles. First, we have the

efforts to raise money for our own projects. Our National Executive decides on those we should help, and groups have set about raising money for practical aid. An example of this is the Calf Scheme just completed at Finley. Twenty-four calves were purchased at \$30 a head; we were fortunate to sell them all within nine months at a profit of \$48 a head. This means that the Finley group has \$1000 ready to devote to Asian Aid.

Tied up with raising money for our own projects is the effort for a group to have a personal link with any particular project to which they are contributing. Finley group members, hearing of the proposal to finance an agricultural scholarship for an Indian student, immediately decided that they would like to provide one such scholarship themselves.

They are moving to get everything organised and get the necessary information. In a further practical approach they decided to see if they could insure the person concerned so that, if he died, they could get their money back and invest it in another student. They are keeping in mind the effort it took to raise this money, and also the means to keep those who have co-operated interested in this programme.

Generally, the people who helped agist these calves were not active Rural Movement members; so the Finley group is going to go out of its way to keep them informed of what is being done with their money. This idea of establishing a personal link with a project in Asia is very important, especially from the point of view of the person who helps the Rural Movement, but is not in regular touch with its activities.

Two weeks ago, Brian Packer, the secretary of the Howlong group, mentioned that his group had discussed the same subject. They liked the idea of this Indian scholarship so much that they decided they would try to raise the money — \$900 — to take over one student for a three-year course. They feel that having the opportunity of putting the fact that they have a personal link in Asia would give the people they expect to help added interest.

### Formation of public opinion

The second approach we take to Asian Aid is the formation of a public opinion that may have the effect of getting certain people to do something about it, or may have the effect of influencing the government to help such countries as India on a government level.

In this field, we invited Professor Sibnarayan Ray, of the University of Melbourne, to address a public meeting at Wagga. Head of the Indian Studies Department in the University, he is not a Christian. The meeting was quite well attended, and was representative of the churches, municipalities and bodies such as the Chamber of Commerce. Professor Ray has been in Australia long enough to know just how much he can get away with; and, when talking on such subjects as the White Australia Policy, he went just as far as he could, and still had everyone's support.

This is a very important thing in informing and forming public opinion. Closely tied up with it is the idea of promoting a public effort to help Asia. The amount of money we can raise is limited, though I think we spent about \$1500 in Asian Aid during the past twelve months; but our idea has always been to influence other bodies. This idea of promoting Asian Aid on the public level is something we must develop.

A perfect example of this is the Wagga "Sister City Scheme", initiated a little over two years ago. South Wagga group sowed the seed and set this movement going. Through their contacts in a number of public organisations, members spread the idea and got general support, so that at the initial meeting every church and public organisation and the Army and Air Force were represented.

The scheme has never looked back. The committee sent the local M.P. to the town adopted in Malaya; people travelling overseas from Wagga have called there; and all are getting down to the business of getting concrete financial help; and strong personal ties have been established.

Rural Movement representatives were invited to the last annual meeting, and we went along because we were anxious to keep the project going. This was to supply a four-wheel drive vehicle to Temerloh, this town in Malaya, and the target was £2000.



The Malayan Ambassador was there and gave a very fine address; but there was still some doubt amongst those present. The first speaker was the Church of England minister, who expressed doubts whether the target could be reached, and said it might be better to try for something less.

#### Giving a practical lead

I thought it then time we did something practical; so I made an immediate promise of \$100 from the N.C.R.M. The effect was remarkable. Where there was doubt before, the next man spoke and said that if the Rural Movement could give \$100, the Lions' Club could give \$200; the Rotary representative promised the same. We gave \$100, but it was worth much more. This is the type of thing we must do to promote Asian Aid on the public level.

This Wagga organisation is now trying to sell the idea to other towns in Australia. In the publicity field, they are trying to get the "Women's Weekly," which is probably the best-read magazine in Australia, to do an article on the project.

This idea of getting the public involved is, I think, the most important aspect of our Asian Aid program. Our own money-raising will always be small; but we can help larger organisations in doing the work we are interested in.

Money which will actually come into Headquarters from Riverina are the \$1000 from Finley, \$500 from Wagga, as another wind-up of the Calf Scheme; and Howlong have indicated that they will soon be ready to put down \$300 as the first yearly payment on the scholarship for an Indian student. Money is continuing to come in from our area to keep our own projects going.

Now I would like to report on the idea of a Rural Movement group in a city.

There was one operating in the city of Wagga, but it closed down after about eight years. Since then, one has been operating successfully in South Wagga. A school-teacher is president, and members include professional men, tradesmen and a couple of farmers.

The idea of a Rural Movement group in the city has proved a success; and there is no reason why our objective of the renewal of the temporal order cannot be as successful from a city base as from the country.

My records show that 40% of active Rural Movement members in the Riverina are not farmers. This idea of city groups is something I have been trying to develop in the last year, and our Lay President, Mike Howley, has shown great interest in it. We have started two such groups at Swan Hill and Albury.

They will take a while to settle down; but they have definite advantages. Because of his work, a farmer is unpredictable as regards time; whereas a city man finishes his work at a definite time and can be sure to be at a meeting. That is important; so, too, is the fact that a city group has wider influence, credit union work being well suited to it.

#### Need for more training

In conclusion, I will refer to the training of members, a subject Bishop Henschke referred to earlier.

Our training in the past 12 months has been limited to our group meetings, Gospel discussions and the study of the Church's social teachings in "Mater et Magistra". This is good and continuous, but it is not enough.

To point out the need for training of active members for this social apostolate, I will quote from the "Decree on the Laity":

"Various parts of the Apostolate demand also a specially suitable formation. In regard to the Christian renewal of the temporal order, the laity should be instructed in the true meaning and value of temporal things, both in themselves and in relation to all the aims of the human person. They should be trained in the right use of things and the organisation of institutions, attentive always to the common good in line with the principles and morals of the social teaching of the Church. Laymen should above all learn the principles and conclusions of the social doctrine, so as to be capable of working for the development of this doctrine to the best of their ability, and of rightly applying these same principles and conclusions to individual cases."

# "The Apostolate in the Local Community"

(By Rev. Father B. B. Gallagher, P.P., South Wagga, N.S.W.)



Rev. Fr. B. B. Gallagher (South Wagga); Rol. Windle (r) and Bill Dreschler (Axe Creek).

## I have tried to base this talk on some of the extracts from "The Decree On The Lay Apostolate", taking it in three steps.

Firstly, I would like to define what is the goal of the apostolate; then to determine the fundamental obstacles to obtaining that goal; and finally to consider some ways and means we might use to obtain it.

The goal of the apostolate could only be that of the Church, and the Fathers of the Vatican Council have given us this goal. They tell us the Church was founded for the purpose of spreading the Kingdom of Christ for the glory of God the Father to enable all men to share in His redemption, and that through them the whole world might enter into a relationship with Christ.

The Rural Movement should take heart and great confidence from that definition, because from the time of its beginning some 25-27 years ago, it took as its objective and goal what is summed up on the covers of Convention programmes: "To restore Christ to the Countryside, and the Countryside to Christ."

It is important that we should always keep very clearly in our mind's eye the ultimate goal of our apostolate.

Society has changed very much in the past 30 years, and perhaps there



is some adaptation to be made to our aims. Perhaps we must look at the countryside in a different perspective now; again, those who were once far-distant inhabitants of the earth are now our close neighbours.

### **Guide-lines are laid down**

Again, the Council necessarily leaves organisations such as the N.C.R.M. a lot of liberty in determining its field of activities; but it has laid down guide-lines where we can find that field, the people amongst whom we could work, and the goal for which we should strive.

The Council, for instance, says: "We wish to list the more important fields of action, namely: Church, community, the family, youth, the social milieu at national and international levels." It tells us last of all that the parish is a noble example of the apostolate on a community level, inasmuch as it brings together the many human differences within its boundaries and merges into the universality of the Church. You see, then, that when we are working on a parish basis we are not being parochial; our work in the parish is part of the universal work of the Church.

Again, the Council indicates the field to be explored in the apostolate of the local community and the apostolate at large.

It indicates the work of the early Christians—so spontaneous, faithful and fruitful in bringing the world to Christ. The Council refers us to examples given in the Acts of the Apostles, the Epistles of St. Paul; and then goes on to say that our own time requires from the laity no less zeal.

Indeed, the Council says that, in these modern times, conditions demand that this apostolate be broadened and intensified with the constantly increasing population, continued progress in science and technology and closer international relationships. The area of the lay apostolate has been immensely widened, particularly in the fields that have been, for the most part, open to the laity alone. And again, we are told that the temporal order must be renewed in such a way that, without detriment to its own proper laws, it may be brought into conformity with the higher principles of Christian life as adapted to the shifting circumstances of time, place and people.

### **No limit to boundaries**

The Council tells us that the laity should not limit their co-operation to parochial and diocesan boundaries; but to extend it to inter-parochial, inter-diocesan, national and international fields. They should, the Council tells us, be concerned about the people of God dispersed throughout the world.

There are various fields of these activities. For example, the Council tells us that it has always been the duty of Christian married partners—but today it is the greatest part of their apostolate—to manifest and prove by their own married life the indivisibility and sanctity of their marriage bond; to confirm the rights and duties of parents and guardians to educate children in a Christian manner; and to defend the dignity and lawful economy of the family. These married people and the rest of the faithful should co-operate with men of goodwill to ensure the preservation of their rights in legislation, and to make sure that governments give due attention to the needs of the family.

Again, the Council tells us that adults need to engage in friendly discussion with young people, who, whether they be in the city or the country and in different fields and environments, are members of the Church, and Christ has to be brought to them wherever they are, and they should be brought to Christ.

The young people have something to give the aged just as the aged have something to give the young people—and young people can often bring us very quickly up with modern conditions.

Adults, the Council tells us, should stimulate young people, first by good example, to take part in the apostolate; and, if the opportunity presents itself, by offering their effective advice and willing assistance. So our activity in the apostolate is itself a work for the younger generation, according to the amount of zeal and interest that we manifest to them . . .

### **Work in the social milieu**

Then, according to the Council, the work in the social milieu means an effort to infuse a Christian spirit into the mentality, customs, laws and structures of the community in which one lives, inasmuch as achieving a responsibility in the laity that cannot be achieved by others.

The excerpts from the Council show us that there is no parish, no area in the whole world that does not need the work of the apostolate, and where it must not be carried out.

These words have only emphasised what Bishop Henschke has said again and again over the years of his association with the N.C.R.M.—that as long as there is one person outside the fold of Christ there will be work and need for the N.C.R.M.

The work of the apostolate in the local community, then, should be designed to give efficacious expression to the Christ formed in the conscience of men. The proper and immediate end of Christian education is simply that.

The work of the apostolate is surely to give efficacious expression to that Christ-informed conscience in the community in which we live. Probably our great defect in the past has been that whilst we spent so much money and energy to provide schools to form Christ in the conscience of the younger generation, when they left school we did not give them the opportunity or the encouragement to express Christ in their conscience. We cast them into other fields and organisations where Christ is not the objective, and we left them there without guidance or help to give expression to that for which we laboured to form in them in their younger years.

The two fundamentals of a group, and it is of the N.C.R.M. we are now speaking specifically, are that the work of the apostolate in the local community must be to gather the men and women together so that you can give them the spiritual formation, and a knowledge and understanding of the particular skill they want in the community where they are concerned.

Then, having equipped them with the two qualifications, you send them out to take their places as Christian members of the community.

N.C.R.M. members will be aware that they do not, for the most part, go into the community as N.C.R.M. members; they go to co-ordinate the work of all people concerned in that which is the pattern of Christian living. If the circumstances require it, they identify themselves as belonging to the N.C.R.M.

There are occasions when the N.C.R.M. will have to take the initiative, sustain the effort and carry it on. But the overall work of the apostolate, as we now find from the Council Decree, is wider than an organisation. It is the spirit that matters, and as you look back over the years at the reports of Rural Movement work you realise that it has been tremendous.

Yet, you can still go down the street and hear people say: "What has the N.C.R.M. done?"

People who have had their finger on the pulse of the community over the years, and have fought so hard for Christian ideals will tell you that in the ultimate, if they wanted anyone to stand beside them, he would be a member of the N.C.R.M. That is because N.C.R.M. members have not done what they have done for the N.C.R.M.; they have done it for Christ. They have taken the spirit given them in their group meetings; they have formed Christ in their conscience; they have gone out and lived as Christians among their fellow-men.

### **This work is fundamental**

I think we could say that it is the work of the N.C.R.M. fundamentally not to do these things, but to have them done; and, if we accept that proposition, two things must be done. Firstly, the people we want in groups are the active members of the N.C.R.M. who give promise of fulfilling its objectives.

So it is that, when you go out to recruit members of the local community for your group, you look first at the community and the people who are in various organisations. You look at their soundness of faith to realise if



they are people who can be stimulated with the conscience of Christ; people who will respond to the call of the Mystical Body, and who will accept the objective of the N.C.R.M. and the Church to bring the community to Christ; who will feel a responsibility to accept these words of the Council, and who can be stimulated to realise that it is their responsibility as laity to renew the temporal affairs of the community in the field of Christ.

Let them join the N.C.R.M. as such. Ask them to come and help you do the job. They have a Christian faith and responsibility as laity. You can ask them where else in the community they can fulfil this responsibility. They have a responsibility under God; here is the opportunity to fulfil it. If you put this to them, you will find some response among good people.

The Council says that the lay person should learn especially how to perform the mission of Christ in the Church by basing his life on the belief in the Divine Mystery of creation and redemption, and by being sensitive to the movement of the Holy Spirit who gives life to the people of God and who urges all to love God the Father . . . This formation could be deemed the basis and condition of every successful apostolate.

It follows from the proposition that if the N.C.R.M.'s main work is to form apostles to work in the local community this formation must be continuing and intense.

### Regular contact necessary

It is essential that they keep regular and frequent contact with one another in group meetings. I would suggest that what happens very often in organisations, particularly in the N.C.R.M., is that members go into other organisations and prove their ideals; but because they go in with good intentions regarding local community affairs, they become so absorbed in them that they do not have time to go to their usual meetings.

Men who were good N.C.R.M. members have become absorbed, with the best of intentions, in other community organisations; but because these organisations were based on material instead of spiritual ideas, their energy and their ideals have been sapped. This has killed their ideal of bringing the countryside back to Christ. They themselves did not lose their ideal of attaining salvation; but in those other organisations their ideals fell short at attaining a material goal.

What, then, is the fundamental problem to be solved in this work of the apostolate in the local community? A pastoral letter Pope Paul wrote when he was Cardinal Archbishop of Milan may help us to sort it out.

Man, he said, has become a prisoner in his own vast, materialistic cage; man believes that he has acquired happiness, and this illusion is born in him by the study that he had dedicated to knowledge and the domination of the world, by the labor he has endured to transform it and render it useful, and by the immense riches that have poured forth from it.

Even if man does not yet believe he has found contentment, says the Cardinal Archbishop as he was then, he is convinced that it lies along this route, and therefore this is the route to follow.

This is a materialistic view of life, with all its enormous repercussions. Perhaps we become so filled with the thought of Communism that we think of Communism and Materialism as being synonymous.

### An historic materialism

Yet there is an historical Materialism—of which the Pope is speaking here—that existed long before Karl Marx and which, the Pope says, men are falling back into today. . . Men want justice, men have hope in the future, but justice for them ends with material things and their hope in the materialistic. If this is what is separating men from God we cannot hope to bring man back to God or God to man unless we first solve this problem.

We cannot solve the problem simply by getting a few good people together to talk things over, and then going home to live their own lives unrelated to what they have been talking about. We can solve it only by

getting good people together, talking about it and praying and acting about it. That, of course, is the fundamental objective of the N.C.R.M.

Where the N.C.R.M. has continued to do that it has succeeded; where it has not done so, it has failed. Groups folded up because they were content to talk and discuss, and meeting-to-meeting was the field of their activity. If they had gone out and had carried the spirit of Christ into their local community, stimulated by what they had received by spiritual formation and the greater knowledge of skills in their particular community fields, they would have claimed the respect of their fellow-men in organisations because people realised they had a foundation and had "thought about it".

That, I think, is the fundamental of work and study in your group. Having got the basis of your objective, the spiritual formation, you have fitted yourself to do the job of sanctifying the local community in its temporalities. Again, Pope Paul says the worship of man has taken the place of the worship of God. He says that man is in the process of losing his religious sense, and defines this religious sense as a natural human aptitude to foresee that man has some relationship with God. That is the purpose of the Church—to bring the world, through men, to perceive a relationship with Christ.

In times such as ours, the Pope says, if religious sense fails religious practice also ceases; and, therefore, to re-educate the modern man to think in terms of God is the main problem to be faced today. That is the Pope's admonition.

### Not simply learning Catechism

To think in terms of God does not simply mean learning your catechism and leaving it at that. It means that you have that mind in you which is Jesus Christ, Our Lord, so that justice, honesty, truth, charity and all those virtues which characterised Christ the man—are the guiding principles which spontaneously determine your thought of action in your sphere, and in the apostolate of the N.C.R.M.

There are two things necessary above all else for the apostolate in the local community: that the members be given the necessary help, guidance and spiritual formation to enable them to think, naturally and confidently, in terms of God; then that they be given the help and the opportunity necessary to enable them to manifest in their community the effects of thinking in terms of God.

The Council reminds us that this co-operation is not confined to Catholics; that Catholics should try to co-operate with all men and women of goodwill and promote whatever is just, whatever holy, whatever lovable. They should hold discussions with them, exalt and improve them with courtesy, and initiate research of social and public practices which should be improved in line with the spirit of the Gospel.

That is what I have been trying to outline in my suggestions to you. The Council tells us what Pope Pius XII and Pope John XXIII said so often before the Council, and what Pope Paul VI has said so often since: The laity must take up the renewal of the temporal order as their own special obligation.

"In the manner of the men and women who helped St. Paul, in spreading the Gospel, the laity, with the right apostolic attitude, supply what is lacking to their brethren. They refresh the spirit of the pastors and the rest of the faithful. They bring to the Church people who are, perhaps, far removed from it, ever increasing co-operation in presenting the Word of God, and especially by means of catechetical instruction."

The Council says that they also offer their special skills to make the care of souls and the administration of the temporalities of the Church more efficient and effective. These words indicate to us in the work of the apostolate the field of our activity and the purpose for which we are working



... They (the laity) should develop an increasing appreciation of their own diocese, of which their own parish is a kind of cell, and thus fulfil the needs of city and rural areas.

### Conforms with characteristics

The N.C.R.M. conforms with the characteristics the Council has named as belonging to those organisations listed as Catholic Action before the Council was convened. It says these organisations should continue and, in this case, they should be adapted to present conditions; it admonishes both clergy and laity working in them to develop them according to the characteristics listed in the Decree On The Laity to an even greater degree.

The N.C.R.M. conforms to those characteristics, and we should have great confidence and courage in carrying on the work. We should be encouraged to know not to change our objectives and ideals. We should realise, though, that as the Council said in the Decree On The Liturgy, the Sacred Council desires us to impart an ever-increasing vigor to the Christian life of the faithful to adapt more suitably to the needs of our own times those institutions which are subject to change; to foster what can promote union among all who believe in Christ, to strengthen whatever can help to form the whole of mankind, in and out of the Church.

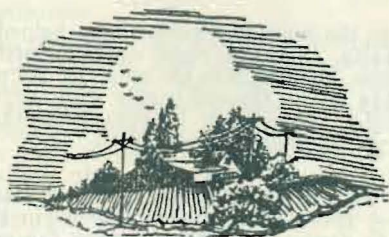
That adaptation is necessary in these fields, and if we do not have to change our ideals, we do not have to change the fundamental basis of our structure.

Locally we have one group largely made up of people who are not farmers, and this is the type of group we must look to more. These people are teachers, businessmen, professional men and the like, who have gone out into the community and taken their places in all fields of work.

They will tell you themselves that their inspiration and their training to equip themselves to go out with an attitude which will claim the respect of their fellowmen came from their group meetings.

The field of the N.C.R.M. is complementary to the apostolate in every other field; but we should look to the N.C.R.M. for special leadership and special efforts in those things pertaining to the rural atmosphere and rural life, not simply of the people who live on the land, but in those things in the whole wide community that begin there, and upon which the whole of the community depends.

You have done that, you will continue to do it; and I think in doing it you will achieve your ideal. Adapting it in the guiding lines of the Council, you will fulfil your objective of "bringing Christ to the Countryside, and the Countryside to Christ."



## The Groups give a Lead



Meme Farrell, Fish Creek (l); Brian Packer, Howlong (r).

The four talks which follow give good examples of "The N.C.R.M. In Action." They were given by four members whose work in district organisations has been outstanding over the years.

### WORKING FOR CO-OPERATIVE HOUSING

By Mr. T. Clark, (Leongatha)

**At one Convention some years ago a recommendation was made that delegates from Victoria take home information about the N.S.W. co-operative legislation and suggest that similar legislation be put on our Victorian statute book.**

That was some of the first good legislation the Rural Movement asked the Victorian Government to bring down; but it's not by any means the only such legislation we have requested and obtained.

Referring to our own efforts at Leongatha, one of our group members raised the query: What are the boys and girls leaving the local High School in December going to do next year? We wondered how many of these would eventually get a living in South Gippsland; and we were very worried about those who would have to drift off eventually into other areas.

This caused a lot of discussion; then someone wrote to different people for information; and finally we were told that Leongatha did not have sufficient population to try to attract secondary industries.

A few meetings later someone brought along the report of the annual meeting of the Goulburn Valley Co-operative Housing Society. We talked about it for 12 months; and then someone said: "We'd better have a housing society. We'll look for some money."



## Applied to the banks

We made applications to the Savings Bank and the Commonwealth Bank. In five weeks we had a reply from the Savings Bank saying that they were quite happy to give us a loan of £150,000, as the group came under the rules and regulations. We nearly died of fright, because we laymen would be expected to form something that was to be responsible for getting that money back to the bank.

We talked about it for another 12 months and then decided to give it a go. We contacted the Registrar and the Y.C.W., who sent two chaps along. These young fellows explained to us how simple it would be; "You've got the finance; you're over that hurdle, and from here on it's just plain sailing." The boys thought that we, being a little older, should be quite happy to go on with it. We were — and did.

Later on, when the Commonwealth Government made available to Victoria finance for co-operative housing, we got the money to form another society; and now Leongatha has five.

The total sum we must get back to where it came from is \$1,300,000. Three of our societies have an interest rate of 4½%, 5¼% and 5½% respectively — and if you know of any other place where you can borrow money at that interest rate, I don't. Total membership is now 250; just over 200 homes have been built, and 25 purchased.

## Proud of our efforts

We are rather proud of these figures, because, over all these years, housing in the Commonwealth has been behind scratch. The best way to do anything about it is to provide new homes. Sometimes we have good-intentioned people who will build a home as soon as they can get finance to do so. That's where housing societies are useful. At the moment, we have a list of 27 couples waiting for finance.

The fifth and newest society is available to those young couples who can qualify for the \$500 grant from the Commonwealth Government. You need a grant for your home; and that \$500 belongs to the young couples, and there's no worry about paying it back.

The first young couple will not be able to build a house until the next financial year. The society was set up to give them the opportunity to buy their block before they were in the position to buy a home.

Our Housing Society says that the Co-operative Act is wonderful. Did you know that it is possible through it to get a title to so many cubic feet of air? There are many upstairs flats, and someone owns the flats below. How are you going to get a title to your upstairs flat?

We have many uses for our land in Victoria, and if we continue spreading out we'll reach the coast everywhere. The Housing Society people worked out the legislation originally; later on they worked out an amendment to let people live above one another, and still have titles to their homes.

Not only housing societies but many other co-operatives can be formed under this Act. I just don't understand why the Church has not made more use of it — in the building of schools, for example.

If you want a school, you get people to form a co-operative. When you have it, you are in a position to borrow; and if you do that under the Co-operatives Act, the Government will guarantee your loan.

## Building an assembly hall

I can't give you all the details; but there is an assembly hall at the Leongatha High School, which has been built under this Act. They had enough members and were able to borrow the money under a Government guarantee. These members run a tuck shop two days a week at the school, and the proceeds from the tuck shop will eventually pay for the assembly hall.

If you were to sit down and wait for the tuck shop proceeds to pay for the hall, you would find that the money was needed for so many other things

along the way that you would never get the hall; but if you get the guarantee that a loan will be available for the hall, you will be using it all the time you are paying for it.

It should be that way with our schools.

The Minister for National Development once addressed the annual meeting of the Victorian Housing Societies, and he made an announcement which surprised us all. He said that a given number of financed co-operative housing societies would build four houses for every three the Housing Commission could build with the same funds.

That was three or four years ago; and, as time goes on, the difference could increase. The land you build houses on is progressively getting dearer, even well out in the country; and that means that a bigger percentage of the total cost is the value of the land against the completed houses.

Although the Minister said that co-operative housing societies could then build four houses where the Housing Commission could build three, I think that variation will increase in the housing societies' favor as time goes on.

## HELPING THE MIGRANTS

(By MR. M. FARRELL, Fish Creek Group)

**We started a Migration Committee when we first started in the Rural Movement. First, we formed a sub-committee to look after the new people who were coming in and obtaining their own land.**

If they came to us, we could give them advice as to whether the proposition they were taking on was any good.

The trouble today is that there are many people coming into our district to land that has been abandoned outside Foster in the Gippsland Shire — nearly 100,000 acres. There are still a few people on that country. The soil is all right, but the country is steep and it has gone right back.

Most of the new people are New Australians who have sold their homes in Melbourne—tradesmen who have come out to the country I speak of where they can't get a living. I'll give you one example.

Two Poles, a mother and a son aged 26, went on to one of these places paying £12,000 for it. It was very steep with a herd of cows on it. The agent bought these cows in a "chopper market"; and they were put on the farm and sold as a herd. The young fellow went on there for a while and found he had a lot of unsound cows; then sold out for £2000 and went back to Melbourne and picked up his own job, his mother taking on a job as a home-help.

## Must get good advice

If these people had only come to someone in the Shire, they could have got advice; and I'm sure that any clergyman would have sent them someone to advise them.

The first New Australians to come to Fish Creek 16 years ago were two single Dutchmen; and since that time something like 40 families — not all Dutch — have come into the district. Some of them have stayed there, and there are nearly 200 children in these families.

These families have got on fairly well because most of them have come to the Rural Movement.

Men must have knowledge of farming to come to our district, but the main thing is where they go. If they go on farms where the farmer is already there, you can put on any man if he is willing to work. The main



men we have been able to help are non-Catholics, because a lot of our non-Catholics have not the families the Catholic farmers have. They don't need the help so much.

One man, who was a draper, has been milking on the shares for about eight years. He has bought a rough block but is not living on it, though he hopes to clear it. He is living on a place at Buffalo and is milking about 200 cows on shares. His two sons are living at Fish Creek, close to where I live; they are milking 130 cows.

He had two nice daughters, but they have married Australians, and the man has lost their help as well as that of his sons. A man who was a draper is now a first-class farmer; but he could never have been if he was put on a farm on his own. He had a ton of faith, but didn't have the experience — and that goes right through the piece.

In a place called Allendale in Western Victoria there is a Presbyterian clergyman named Mr. Schroeder, who has brought out about 500 migrants. There was a nomination for a North of Irelander named John Hill, whose nomination broke down when he was within ten days of landing in Victoria.

A migrant cannot go into a hostel if he has more than three children; this man had a wife and eight children. Mr. Dean, the Victorian Immigration Officer in Melbourne, got in touch with me through Father Rafter of the Catholic Immigration Office.

### Arrived with £2

Hill got off the boat at 2 o'clock and arrived in Fish Creek at 10 o'clock, after leaving his wife and children at the Salvation Army Home in Melbourne. All he had when he landed in Australia was £10, and he had £2 when he landed in Fish Creek.

I took him to Toora, having already got in touch with British United Dairies, who have a big milk factory there. They had a job and a house for him, the rent being £5 a week. The problem was that he had no money; so I paid the rent for two weeks. A local Rural Movement man took him around to Yarram, and bought him beds and bedding and a few other things.

Two non-Catholic businessmen in the town took him in hand; but within a month he was going to leave, though he was getting £28 a week with his overtime. Mr. Dean called on him and then called at my farm and told me that the man was going to leave.

I went up to see him on a Sunday, and he had just arrived home for his dinner. I gave him "the drill" for half-an-hour, and I think he had indigestion by the time I finished. He said he wouldn't go; but it wasn't long before he was out in Bass Strait on an oil-drilling boat, earning £60 a week. I went up to see him during his week off, but when I got there he had gone back to Melbourne to work.

I went to the two non-Catholic businessmen in the town, and this is how they took it; "Well, we got him out here. He's here in Australia — and good luck to him." That's the spirit we want to have quite a lot of; even some of our Rural Movement members say once they get a let-down: "That's the finish of that!"

We have been let down often, and I say: "Don't let us stop. Keep on going and we'll come out all right in the finish."

I'll give you an idea of that from a list I have here. Nine of the men on it are working on shares, and eight of them have already bought their own farms . . . We have brought any number of men out; but we have hundreds of families in England — some of them have gone there from Ireland to work — who would come out to Australia.

If Mr. Schroeder, a Presbyterian minister can bring out 500, or have 500 nominations, I don't see why we can't do the same.

## A CHRISTMAS "CAR-STICKER" CAMPAIGN

(By MR. BILL HORAN, Cobden Group)

**At the December meeting of the Cobden N.C.R.M. Group, it was decided to sponsor some sort of a "Road Safety Campaign" over the Christmas holidays; and it was considered essential that all Christian communities join in it.**

The group decided that a member be appointed to draw up a programme and try to get the co-operation and assistance of other Christian denominations of Cobden and Camperdown. The appointed member approached the Methodist, Presbyterian and Church of England clergy, and they were most grateful for the opportunity of taking part.

We had a 7" x 5" sticker printed, carrying the words: "Keep Christ in your Christmas. Drive Safely". The idea was to get these stickers inside as many cars as possible, so that they would be a constant reminder to those who were driving cars that they had not only the responsibility as the driver of a motor car, but also as a Christian. This road safety has not only become a social problem; it is also a grave moral problem.

We are thankful that we have been able to gain the co-operation of non-Catholics in this work, and we feel that the Cobram Group has started something where we are working just away from the social order but through a moral code.

### Campaign was successful

We feel that this programme was extremely successful. A survey of drivers who had stickers in their cars told us that they were more attentive to road signs and more willing to accept the obligation of a driver of a car.

The Cobden Group committee has always felt that it was a very rushed programme over the Christmas period. So we decided that a meeting of all denominations who took part in the campaign at Christmas would be called prior to the Easter holidays to try to co-ordinate a little better.

This meeting was held in Cobden in February, representatives of most of the denominations taking part in the previous campaign attending. It was decided that a programme should go on over Easter; a sub-committee of one Catholic and two non-Catholics was appointed to draw this up, to distribute literature and generally make the plan known.

It was decided, too, to extend the campaign from Cobden and Camperdown to areas beyond; and it went to Peterborough and Port Campbell, the two major seaside holiday resorts.

One interesting thing happened to me during the campaign. I was giving out stickers and went to the Cobden Church of England manse to meet the minister there. He was away, but I met another clergyman on supply from Portland. He distributed the leaflets in Cobden, and also made sure that this programme would go through to Portland — one of the places which will be one of Victoria's big centres very soon now.

I feel that the programme has been very worthwhile because it has served three purposes: First, to make people aware of their obligations as drivers of cars; second, to show us that it is possible in these Ecumenical days to work harmoniously with those who are not of our belief in something that has become a moral issue; and thirdly, it has given us the glorious opportunity to put Christ back into our Countryside.

## HOWLONG GROUP AND "WOOL FOR INDIA"

(By BRIAN PACKER, Group Secretary)

**Recently the Australian Government made a gift of wool to India; and our group can claim some credit for it.**

Here is some of the background of how we hit on this idea of making this gift.

One of the things that influenced us a great deal was Pope John's



statement that the wealthy countries had an obligation to the poorer ones. Whatever way you look at it, Australia is a wealthy country. There is no hunger here, but you cannot say the same about India and other Asian countries.

Someone said that we must help these countries because we must combat Communism. That only reveals a weakness in our thinking. If we do these things only for the fear of Communism, I believe we are doing them from the wrong motive. If Communism were to collapse tomorrow, we would still have these people to be helped to get off the misery level.

We also realise that the best way to help people is to help them to help themselves. If a man is hungry, it is better for him to go and try to help himself to feed himself — to grow some vegetables or work for a living rather than to get handouts all the time.

We realised that if we could get some project going it would be of continuing help to these people, rather than a case of helping them this year and letting them die next year because we could not afford to continue giving them help.

It was because of this that we were looking for some simple project, and we hit upon this one that John Young expounded.

John Young was in India to give advice to the Indian Government on technical matters in their woollen mills. He found that the Indians were quite capable of working them, though the mills were old. He said that the whole trouble was that they did not have the capital or the foreign exchange to buy our wool; so he expounded the idea that if the Commonwealth Government were to make a £5 million revolving loan, it would be a tremendous boost to the Indian textile manufacturers.

We saw the report of that in the papers and we got further information, we wrote to the Indian Embassy and they told us they thought it a splendid idea.

### "Airy-fairy" ideas useless

When we had gathered all the information we could we discussed the best way to put it to our United Farmers' branch. I have found that when you are putting anything to the United Farmers or any such organisation, you must get your facts clear and show that you have a sound proposition. You must have concrete facts — it's no good putting up "airy-fairy" ideas.

We put the facts to the branch and it impressed members very much. People could also see that it would help ourselves in the long run. There was no trouble putting the idea through the branch; it went to the District Council and there it made a great impression on people.

It is very important that we try to do such things as this, whether we succeed or not in gaining our objective. We leave an impression on people, and it is vital that we continue such work.

Looking back and trying to reason out why this move was successful, I think the important thing was the group meetings.

Had we read the article as individuals, we would have thought it a good idea; but I doubt if we would have put it to our United Farmers' members because we would have lacked the confidence and the facts that would convince other people.

To foster an idea and make you enthusiastic about it there is no doubt of the value of talking to group members. That was the important thing — a group starting it at a group meeting. Without that I do not think we would have pushed the idea — and perhaps India might not have the wool today.

# Spiritual Talk

(By REV. FR. JOHN DUFFUS, BENDIGO)

**I shall base what I have to say to you in this talk on what the Vatican Council has to say to you about what you really are.**

The universality, or catholicity, of the Church has various meanings. It means, of course, that the Church is universal; that it is meant for men of all kinds — the colour of the skin, the race you belong to and the country you live in does not basically matter.

The basic thing is that we are all members of the human race with basic human dignity, and therefore, the potential or actual dignity of being God's sons and daughters.

The universality of the Church also means that the Church teaches the universe, or the totality of the truth that Christ came to bring us, without leaving out anything — and the Church must strive at all times to bring the totality of truth to all mankind.

There have been times in the history of the Church when certain truths, without exactly being ignored, have so to speak "gone under". They have not been emphasised the way they should be; but over the past half-century and, perhaps, a little longer, they have been getting more definite emphasis.

The renewed interest in Holy Scripture; the revival and reformation of the living liturgy of the Church are in this category. Another of these is the Lay Apostolate.

### The beginning of things

But really we need only go back to the Acts of the Apostles at the very beginning of the Church and we will find St. Paul talking about the laity he associates with himself and his apostolate.

All this remembering by the Church of the total truth of Christ found its fruit in many ways in the Council, which again emphasised basic truths that we had, to some extent, lost sight of.

One of the truths that the Council has said to us is: "You are the laity."

### Who are the "laity"?

You have known for a long time, but what the term really means is important. It has often been used as a term not exactly of contempt, but of "ordinariness". We talk about the laymen as distinct from the professional, just as the doctors talk about laymen not understanding things medical.

That is not what the term really means. It comes from the Greek, and it means the "People of God". If you look at St. Peter's Epistle you find him saying to us: "You who were not a people are now a people."

What is it that makes the difference between not being a people and now being a people?

It is our Baptism. Just as truly as you become part of the human race by your birth, so do you become part of the "People of God"; just as truly as the conglomeration of Hebrew slaves who left Egypt and passed through the waters of the Red Sea became a free people, when you passed through the waters of Baptism you became members of the "Free People of God", enjoying the real freedom of the "Sons of God".

This is not something that involves just you as an individual. You become part of God's People; you become part of the Body of Christ because we all share in the same life and so we are in the one Body — the Body of Christ.

This becoming a member of the laity — a member of the People of God — is a thing of great splendour and dignity because you share in



God's own life. You become a brother or sister of Christ; you become a son or daughter of the One we can then truly call "Our Father".

Because all of us are the People of God we are, as the Council tells us, priests, prophets and kings. This is why the Bishops at the Council said to us that Christ the Lord, High Priest taken from among men made the New People "a kingdom and priests to God the Father." The baptised by regeneration and by the appointing of the Holy Spirit are consecrated as a Spiritual House and a Holy Priesthood, so that through all those works which are those of Christian men, they may offer spiritual sacrifices and proclaim the power of Him Who has called them out of darkness to His marvellous light.

When I quote from the Council I always do so somewhat warily because I think that anything like this needs to be pondered over, underlined, marked and pulled to pieces.

The thing is, of course, that these things are so important — and often so deep — that you cannot be satisfied with a skimpy treatment of them. You must go over and over them to see what really is at the bottom of them.

However, the Bishops say that because of our baptism we are priests.

### What is a priest?

But what is a priest? He is a mediator, a bridge — one who takes the things of man and brings them to God, and brings the gifts of God back to mankind. That is why one of the titles of the Pope is "Supreme Pontiff" (Bridge-Builder), a link between mankind and God.

Christ is the perfect priest because He is both God and man. You could not get anything more perfect — true man, true God. He brings to mankind the gifts of God, but before He does, He offers to God what man should give Him, but could not give Him — the Sacrifice of Calvary.

You and I cannot be quite like Christ; yet, through our Baptism we share in God's life, become sons of the Father and brothers and sisters of Christ. In our Baptism we are born again to share in the Divine Life. This makes us links between mankind and God; in other words, it makes us priests. So we offer our human lives — not just ordinary human lives, but lives made divine because we share in the God-life.

At the same time we offer the world we live in as human beings to the Father. That is why the Bishops said to us that all the disciples of Christ, persevering in prayer and praising God should present themselves as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God.

This is basically what we offer — ourselves, our lives, the world that we live in; but remember, the function of a priest is two-way. It is not only offering the things of mankind to God; it is also bringing the things of God to mankind.

That is why the Bishops said to us that "the laity must everywhere on earth bear witness to Christ and give an answer to those who seek an account of that hope of eternal life which is in them".

In other words, we have the instruments of bringing to the world that we live in what Christ, the Great High Priest, brought to us. That means too, that because we share God's life we make holy the ordinary temporal things in which we are involved.

You know that anything Christ did had tremendous dignity because of the one who did it.

The supreme example is His sacrifice on Calvary. What gives it its value is the love of Christ for the Father and the fact that it is the God-man who does this on Calvary.

### A special dignity

When Christ was an ordinary worker in Nazareth, what He did had special dignity because it was the God-man and not just the ordinary man who did it; and because we share in the God-life, it means that anything we do, even though it may be ordinary to all intents and purposes, has the dignity of being done by a son of God, by one who shares in the Divine Life.

That gives us a reverence for ourselves as God's sons and daughters; it gives us a reverence for others who are similarly privileged; it gives us a zeal to spread this dignity to all men and all human activities. This is the plan of the Father, that all men should share in this dignity.

To come to the crux of the thing: The perfect exercise of our priesthood is in the Mass. When we come to the liturgy of the Eucharist, Christ renews the offering He made of Himself on Calvary. If we are going to be involved in this we must somehow be associated with Christ. This association comes through our Baptism, where we share in the life that Christ had supremely so that He is head of the Body of which we are members. We need our Baptism to be able to share really in the Mass.

An unbaptised person cannot share in the Mass the way we can. Only the baptised can do so because they are at one with Christ, and have this priesthood we get through Baptism. Christ's supreme act of priesthood was exercised in His death and resurrection; and St. Paul tells us: "We in our Baptism were plunged into Christ's death and resurrection."...

The Bishops at the Council said that the common priesthood of the Faithful and the ministerial or hierarchial priesthood are nonetheless inter-related, each of them in its own special way in the participation of the one Priesthood of Christ. The Ministerial Priest, by the sacred power he enjoys, forms and rules the priestly people. Acting in the person of Christ, he makes present the Eucharistic Sacrifice and offers it to God in the name of all the people; but the Faithful, in virtue of their royal Priesthood, join in offering the Eucharist."

That means that we are not just "present at Mass"; we are actively offering with Christ to the Father.

### Acting their dual part

A little further on, the Bishops say: "Taking part in the Eucharistic Sacrifice which is 'the fount and apex of the Christian life, they (the laity) offer the Divine Victim to God, and offer themselves with it; but both by reason of the offering and through Holy Communion, all act their dual part in this liturgical service; not, indeed, all in the same way, but each in that way that is proper to himself."

The Bishops go further and say that whenever the Christian receives one of the Sacraments, he is exercising his priesthood.

This is not something we have thought about much. We tend to think of ourselves as being on the receiving end at Confession, Communion and Confirmation; but the Bishops have told us that this is an exercising of our priesthood... The Bishops say: "We are more perfectly bound to the Church by the sacrament of Confirmation, (and) the Holy Spirit endows (us) with special strength so that (we) are more strictly obliged to spread and extend the Faith, both by word and by deed as true witnesses of Christ".

Again, we see the idea of being "mediators" between mankind and God — people who bring the things of God to mankind, and are therefore working in harmony with Christ in leading men to the Father.



Our very prayer must be priestly — it is mediatorial. Our gratitude and our bearing witness to Christ, our love, our self-denial — in all these things we are priests with Christ.

Touching on the aspect of "prophets", a prophet is a messenger from God; and Christ is the Great Prophet because He is, as St. John tells us, "the Word of the Father" — the one who comes with the message from the Father.

The Bishops say that the Holy People of God share also in Christ's prophetic office. It spread abroad a living witness to Him, especially by means of a life of Faith, Hope and Charity, and by offering a sacrifice of praise . . . We, with Christ, are prophets to the world we live in.

### Must spread the Faith

By virtue of the knowledge you possess, and the fact that the Holy Spirit is at work within you, the Bishops have said that the obligation of spreading the Faith is imposed on every disciple of Christ, according to his state. In these days, especially perhaps in matters of morals, we should thank God that we have an infallible truth; that we can be at one in our own knowledge and our own sureness with the Infallible Church.

Finally, we are Kings; we are meant to rule and subdue the world, to bring it to perfection according to the total plan of God. This does not mean that we must have Catholics in all positions of power; but it does show the importance of your social action being used for the perfection of mankind — not only as human beings, but as potential or actual sons of God.

All the various forces in our community must be brought to the way of Christ. We are the "community", and if we do not do that, who will?

Christ is the King of Truth. We must bring men to realise the truth about themselves, about the real man, who is also God's son. So we must bring the world under our rule; it must be a place that helps man to reach his Heavenly Father. This is how we are kings with Christ.

The Bishops have said that the Kingdom of God takes nothing away from the temporal welfare of people. Rather does it foster and take to itself, insofar as they are good, the ability, riches and customs in which the people express themselves.

The Church, which is God's people, is a community of Priests, Prophets and Kings. And you are God's people.

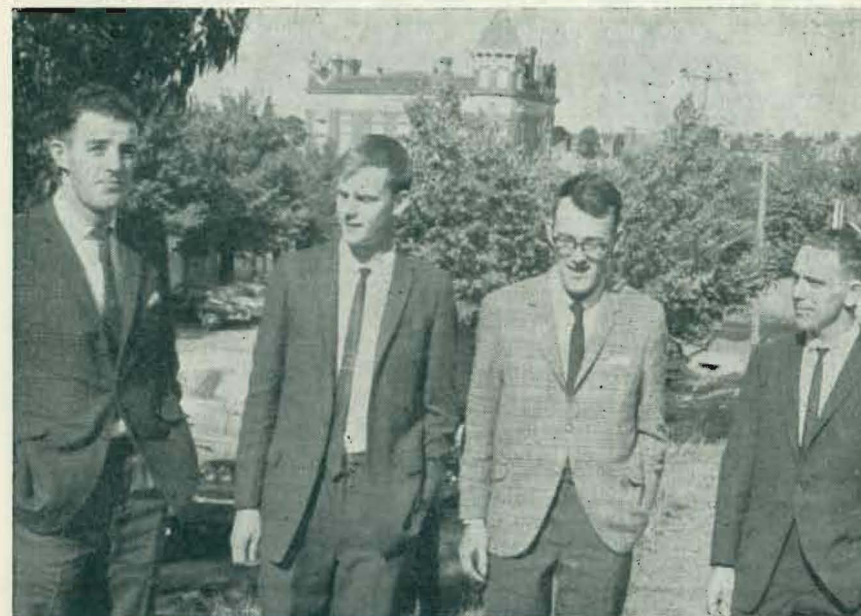
The Bishops have said to us that "the Church both "prays and labours that the people of the entire world may become the people of God, the Body of the Lord and the Temple of the Holy Spirit; and that in Christ, the head of all, full honour and glory may be rendered to the Creator and Father of the Universe."

This is the mission of the layman because it is the mission of the Church. This is your mission.



## YOUTH IN THE N.C.R.M.

(By Mr. Terry Long, Maryborough Group)



"Youth in the N.C.R.M.": (L. to R.) Brian Barry, Manangatang; Gerard McKay, Mangoplah; Bill Ryan, Leongatha; Gilbert Roberts, Mangoplah.

In 1939 the Bishops of Australia gave their blessing to the National Catholic Rural Movement because they, in their wisdom, could see the decline of Australian agriculture.

At this time the farming community was being stifled by debt, lack of services, and restrictions on credit. These factors, combined with poor seasons, made life in rural communities very unattractive, presenting a challenge the Bishops and clergy saw and accepted.

They were not alone in doing this. Many men and women, young and old alike, realised that if this country was to develop and prosper something had to be done to keep people on the land. This was one reason why so many joined the Rural Movement.

Conditions on the land are good today, with electricity, water supplies, good roads, telephones and the like; but in the early days people could join the Rural Movement to help get these things. That was a very practical reason; but it is no longer so today. This does not mean that there is no longer need for constant transfusions of youth into its ranks.

A great number of prospective members are attracted to the Rural Movement by the Primary Produce Gift Scheme and Asian Aid. The latter, in particular, gets a good deal of publicity in the community generally, and younger Group members are always in the forefront of this activity.



The aims and objects of the Rural Movement have not changed though rural conditions have. We need young men and women in our Movement who recognise the problems facing us today; and they should be trained to handle the problems of today and those of the future.

It is natural to expect the younger generation to bear the bulk of the work; but if the work is to be successful, the help and guidance of more experienced members are essential.

### New vigor, new ideas

The world of today is constantly changing; to be able to cope with the problems these changes present we need those who can recognise them and act upon them. Young people brought up in this fast-moving world, can bring to us new vigour and new ideas; they can help older people realise that they are behind the times in some respects.

If encouragement is not given to these young members, they can soon be lost to the Rural Movement with tragic results to the community generally; given the right encouragement, they will respond excellently.

Young people with more time on their hands can devote more time to the Apostolate than is possible for the majority of older members.

I think that just having younger members working with older members in the Group is invaluable in helping them in their training to do things in the correct way. This training of members to take part in public life has always been one of our most important functions.

If the full benefit of our work is to be realised we must continue to train our members, especially the young members.

For youth to be effective in the Rural Movement their two greatest needs are experience and training. Perhaps, in the past, when the Rural Movement was not attracting enough members, older and experienced members did not give the young people the benefit of their experience. The result was that there were few new members and Groups began to stagnate.

It was dead, people thought; but now, with the influx of new young members, the Rural Movement—as the Episcopal Chairman said at the Convention in Albury last year—is having a second Spring.

The youth of today, given the right encouragement, will respond and live up to what our fathers tried to achieve when the N.C.R.M. began: To bring Christ to the Countryside and the Countryside to Christ.

(This introductory talk was followed by group discussions led by the younger delegates—Editor.)



## THE CHURCH IN THE MODERN WORLD

(By Rev. Father J. M. Fahey, S.J., Institute of Social Order, Kew, Vic.)



Rev. Fr. J. M. Fahey, S.J., and two New Guinean students from Belloc House.

**The Decree "The Church In the Modern World" was the last to be passed by the Council, and the English translation has not yet been printed in Australia. It is by far the longest of the Decrees (70 pages); a certain amount of it is a repetition of Pope John's two Encyclicals, "Mother and Teacher" and "Peace on Earth".**

I will describe my impressions of this Decree, taking it on four different levels.

Everyone will be able to understand Level One, I hope. It is what we call a "Press handout".

Concerning this Decree: The First Vatican Council was held in 1870 at a time when the evil social effects of the Industrial Revolution and European colonisation were obvious to many millions of men. The chief work of this Council was to define the infallibility of the Pope.

About the same time, Marx and Engels were completing their theory of Communism, and Communists were already putting into practice some of their theories—for example, the Paris Commune of 1870-71, the first economic Communist society.

Ninety-six years have passed since Vatican 1, and it is hardly even an open question whether the Catholic Church or Communism has



changed the world more—I do not say for the better. In fact, the Communists have changed the Catholic Church largely and made it interested in social problems. They also changed Capitalism and many other things. They changed the Church through fear; but Vatican Council II did not repeat that mistake.

This longest of the Decrees states that Christians cannot desire anything more ardently than to serve the man of the modern world with marked generosity and success. And how do we do this?

The task of all is to make the institutions of society serve the needs of man. The Church believes she can contribute towards making the family of man and its history more human. It does not say "more holy" at this stage—just more human.

The Christian who shirks his moral duty—and in the context that means one who does not take an active part in social and political institutions—neglects his temporal duties, his duties towards his neighbour, and even God, and jeopardises his eternal salvation.

The Decree mentions among all the social problems the family in a changing society, the extremes of poverty and wealth in individuals and nations, the problems of over-population, of peace and war, of world government and of Communism.

#### Human social institutions

At Level II, the Decree appraises human social institutions because of their big effect on human beings. It encourages Catholics to take an active part in the running of human social institutions such as trade unions, farmers' organisations and political parties. It encourages co-operation between Catholics and non-Catholics in solving the social problem.

In other words, it approves of the Social Apostolate which the Rural Movement has understood and practised for many years.

The Council also encourages Catholics to help the underdeveloped, hungry countries, and to aim at the abolition of poverty, either among individuals or nations. The N.C.R.M. has been active in that way for five years now. You have anticipated the desire of the Church on this matter of the Social Apostolate, and you are to be congratulated on the last 35 pages of the Decree.

On Level III, I will concentrate on the first 35 pages of the Decree. It can give you a deeper understanding of what the Social Apostolate is all about, and what the Rural Movement has been doing without quite knowing what it has been doing. We are going to find out what the Social Apostolate would be according to the Decree—and, as you will find out at the end, the Social Apostolate is now and henceforward abolished!

If you are going to remain in the Rural Movement doing the work all the time, it will not really be the Social Apostolate—it will just be being an ordinary good Catholic.

Going into the Decree itself and looking at what—as far as I can see—were the ideas behind the Bishops when they made this particular Decree, we will take the title itself. It is not "The Church AND the Modern World": it is "The Church IN the Modern World". The Church in that title means all baptised Catholics, and when I use the word "Church" here I mean all baptised Catholics, including the clergy and the laity. Occasionally, the word is used in the sense of the "Authoritative Teachers of The Church," or the bishops and priests.

Just occasionally, some people talk as if the Church and its activities—and some members of the Church—are not deeply involved in the world. In a sense, they are not; however, if you talk of the Church as carrying on its activities without being deeply involved in the world, the Church begins to look like a group of people in the world, but not of it.

Some Catholics have in some periods regarded themselves and the world as two distinct things. They are in the world, but not of it, and seek to save their souls by detachment from the world, and without committing

themselves to the interests and problems of the world. So they take the expression "the Church is a Pilgrim Church" as being the only possible description of the Church in the world.

It is true that the Church has, at times, so concentrated on what it calls the "spiritual" that it has not seen and opposed social injustices of the most serious kind when it should have.

This is the stage at which I will put Level III of the history of the First Vatican Council. I mention again the Industrial Revolution and the orgy of European colonialism which broke out about 1870, or earlier. These European powers carved up Africa and Asia between them from 1850 to 1914. In doing so, as we see now, they overthrew civilisations which had lasted for thousands of years and must have been good to some extent.

#### One result of colonialism

They changed social systems, and they put nothing in their place except rubber and copra plantations and about a dozen varieties of the Christian religion. That was one result of colonialism; and, at the same time, the system of Communism being perfected by Marx and Engels was being organised.

You can see from that that when the First Vatican Council was called together it had its problems, the problems of the Church.

It faced the responsibility of the Church as it saw it at that time; but it showed no responsibility to the world and its problems.

It was not that many bishops did not at that same time have that sense of responsibility. The German bishops especially, for 20 years or more, had had a big interest in the problems of the Industrial Revolution.

But the Council, as such, was concerned with the Church looking inward at itself and so it defined the infallibility of the Pope, and said nothing about conditions of workers in factories, or the social problems of the world.

During the last 40 years of the 19th century, on the whole, the male city workers in Europe ceased to be practising Catholics. Moreover, the missions in the colonies made no real progress. Those who became Catholics in the countries of Africa and Asia were those who had no culture of their own to speak of—they were the poor, the outcasts, they were converted and they were Europeanized. There was no real impact made on the Hindus in India—the rich and cultured—the educated Chinese, or the Buddhists in Ceylon and South-East Asia. The result was that, when the educated natives later led the "Freedom Movements" against colonialism, most of them were non-Christians, who tend to associate Catholicism and Europeanism.

In addition to this, the world was becoming more secularised. The result of all that is that to people outside the Catholic Church, it seemed that the Church's message was one for the souls of people or for Christians; its message to the world seemed to be completely other-worldly and had little relation to the real lives or problems of people.

Vatican Council II did not make that mistake. It is interesting to see that while the Council was in progress, there were many other conferences being held in cities throughout the world by the world's rulers. They were conferring about aims to develop nations, to conquer space, and to prepare a brighter future for mankind in this world. Many of them saw one hope for mankind—atheistic Communism.

#### Non-Catholics show interest

Non-Catholics looked at this conference of Catholic bishops in Rome with great interest. They saw the leaders of a great religious body which exercises a great moral influence for peace, aiding poor nations and seeking the solution of the population problem. They asked themselves if the Church would respond. Would it have some answer to the social problems of the world?

It did not, because there was no intention at the beginning of the Council to say anything about the social problems of the world, except incidentally.



Then, at a certain stage, the bishops began to think that a church looking at its own problems and leaving the world alone to solve its problems just could not renew itself completely.

After all, the Church, by definition, has a mission to the world. So the bishops said that they should say something about the solution of the world's social problems. Cardinal Suenens was the first to propose a document of this kind. It was seconded by Cardinal Montini, now Pope Paul VI; and so it became a decree.

The Council addresses the modern world because it has its own problems. As history changes, the problems of the world change, and the Church should have something to say about the social problems of each epoch in the history of man. The world is the whole of creation and also human history and civilisation.

We note also that the world has been wounded by sin—it is a fallen world. It is at this stage that people say: "We must get out of that world. It is a fallen world." This is very simple Christian doctrine; but we must remember also that the world is redeemed by God who entered His own creation. He loved this creation and He served it. "God so loved the world that He gave His only Son." The Apostle, St. John, says "not to condemn the world, but that the world must be saved through Him." What we are trying to see is what the world means, and then to ask: Why have people been so afraid of the world when, in fact, the world itself is a sacred thing?

When God the Son became man and entered the human race at a particular age in its history, and in a particular country and culture, He belonged to a particular family like all of us. He belonged to a particular nation, sharing its science, religion and culture. He was born into a particular religion; He was part of His world.

We tend to think of Christ as coming to rule the world. He was Lord and Master of the world, but the way He saved the world was by serving it.

This is the Council's statement: "The Church's task in the world today, inspired by no earthly ambition, seeks to carry forward the work of Christ, and Christ entered this world to give witness to the truth, to rescue and not sit in judgment, to serve and not to be served."

Whatever is said in "The Church In The Modern World" does not contradict in any way the fact that the Church's task is a spiritual one—to convert the world to a belief in Christ and the love of Christ.

### What is the world?

When the Council defines the Church as "the People of God", as baptised Catholics, what is the world? Naturally, the Council takes its description of the world from the Bible. Firstly, the world is all of God's creation—the universe and all mankind. You can see at once that the two are not really separate. We are in the world, we are part of it because God created us. God's creation includes all mankind, and when God made this creation, as Genesis said; "God saw everything that He had created, and behold, it was very good."

This world God has made, especially humanity, is not something made, then left alone. It has had a developing history; and so the world that God has made is the human race at its various stages in its evolution and in its historical developments. That is why this Council addresses the modern world, the world in which we live.

Going on to the fourth level: The decree contains some new light on the Social Apostolate; but it is rather obscure. The Decree is by the authoritative teachers of the Church—the only teachers you must listen to. But, besides these teachers, the ideas behind the Decree are those of theologians, both Protestant and Catholic who, for 20 years, have been discussing the role of the Church in the modern world.

These theologians began with the fact that Christians, after 1900 years of Christianity, are not very influential in the world as a whole. What the Church thinks has very little influence on what happens in three-quarters of China, or on the majority of people in the Asian countries. Approximately

27 per cent of the world is Christian; about 18 per cent is Catholic, and that percentage is diminishing, not because Catholics are growing fewer in number, but because the world's population is increasing so fast that the percentage of Catholics and Christians is diminishing.

The influence of the Church on the world, and even on Christians in the world, is not as great as it was in the Middle Ages.

### Where lies the blame?

The next thing the theologians noticed was that the clergy, when they look at the fact that the Church is not really getting its message over, or having it followed, have the tendency to blame the people who are listening and not the people who are talking.

If I say to you that you should be doing this or that and you are not, then I condemn modern materialism, coldness towards authority and the like, whereas theologians tended to blame the Church—in other words, the clergy. Why did they do this? (It is a very subtle point.)

We have the Church and the world and in the Church we have a "cult", or the worship of God. We have the Mass, the sacraments, reading the Bible and prayer; then we have the world. What is the world, and has it any priority over the cult? Which is more important—to engage in worldly activities or worship God through the Mass? The theologians observed, in answer to that, that the clergy tend to give one answer and the laity another. They give it in their lives and not necessarily in words.

The answer the clergy would give is that the order of Divine Hierarchy is that the cults must have priority over worldly activities; the laity's answer is that they are really interested in worldly activities and need the cult to give a religious and absolute value to those activities.

The world can be described by the activities it engages in. The world is people living, breathing, eating, marrying, having children, earning a living, defending one's country, politics, farming, sport, art, television, music, liking or hating your boss, getting drunk, paying and hating taxes, etc.

Because the clergy are specialists in "cult" they like to give priority to cult, and life's activities are sanctified by that, by the forgiveness of sins. They say that you make life's activities part of the worship of God, but it is the cult that matters.

The laity know that life's activities are what really matter, in fact; but they do not matter enough to a man unless they are made holy by "cult", by being given an adequate meaning, by becoming an adequate worship of God.

In a sense, the theologians say that neither of these two propositions is quite right; but if you were to say one of them is wrong, the clergy is wrong. God did first love the world and saved it, and the Holy Spirit is always active in the world saving us. The Church is one of the results of God saving the world; then we notice that men are saved by worldly activities, by making their activities conform to the will of God.

If you reduce everything a man should do to one little thing, ultimately all say: "You must do the will of God, as your conscience tells you to do"; and, as I said, the will of God for most people is worldly activities.

### The reign of God

Men are saved by their worldly activities—but by making God reign in their worldly lives.

We have noticed that all worldly activities are "material"—if you put worldly activities first you are a materialist in a sense. These activities may involve the spiritual, but they are all secular and belong to the world that will have an end. Human civilisations, families, people and cities will end; but it is still God's will that we fulfil our duties and personal responsibilities to the world, and God wills that civilisations, cities, nations should acknowledge His law and His reign.

This means that worldly activities are ultimately a continuation and perfection of the creative act of God in making the world. "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth; have dominion over the fish of the sea, the birds of



the air and every living thing." That is from Genesis; but it means applied science, scientific farming, etc. It is the perfecting of God's creation; and so the duty of practically everybody is to be worldly, to continue God's creation of the world, to perfect it by the application of human knowledge and by making it serve the needs of man.

It is true, of course, that Christ made His contribution to worldly activities by becoming incarnate in the world, with its human language, religions, etc. All of these things in some way become sacred as, in a sense, did all those things Christ thought worthy to perform—breathing, eating, working, etc. It was the world first of all that Christ raised by coming into it, because He joined it and approved of worldly activities.

The New Testament teaches that Christ was Priest, Prophet and King; and, as the Council decree says, Christians then share in the priesthood, the prophetic office and the kingship of Christ. Christ was priest and worshipped God perfectly: He was also prophet and king. When you ask should you put cult or worldly activities first, Christ gives the answer. He is priest, prophet and king; and all of them have priority or, if you like, none of them have. They are all done perfectly as one ought to do them.

The Decree on the Church tends, on the whole, to give the Kingship of Christ rather a spiritual meaning as if it were also a revelation of some theological doctrine about the Church and the soul.

The New Testament says that Christ became Lord or King of the world by His resurrection. The peculiar thing about His resurrection is that He became King by conquering all the enemies of God and man and, last of all by conquering death. The strange thing about a person rising from the dead is this: He is material in the sense of being bodily, or worldly, but he is not a soul. One of the odd things about the early Christians was that they were not the least bit interested in saving their souls; they were only interested in saving their bodies, or rising from the dead. Why?

It was because they had a faint suspicion that all human activities are, if you like, spiritual; or, if you like, material, depending on whether they come from the soul or the body.

### **Belief of early Christians**

They believed that we were all persons spiritual and material; but there is really no difference. You cannot separate the two. The early Christians, too, were not happy going to heaven with just their little souls unattended by all the worldly activities made possible by the body. They wanted to rise from the dead. That is why the Apostles' Creed says: "I believe in the resurrection of the body." It does not say: "I believe in the salvation of the soul."

We also believe that we will rise from the dead with our bodies. If we can take St. Paul seriously, he also believes that the earth is going to be saved and transformed into a redeemed earth; but it is, in fact, Christian belief that the world will be transformed as a result of being redeemed.

Now, the only thing is that some theologians say that the earth is going to be redeemed not precisely by God but by Christians—by the worldly activities of human Christians.

If they succeed in raising the earth and civilisation to a sufficiently higher grade, and their souls become holy in doing so, then the earth will be saved through them as they are saved through Christ—and that would be their lordship over this earth.

Now I will read you this particular part of St. Paul: "The creation waits with an eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God, for the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will, but by the will of Him who subjected it in hope, because the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay, and obtain the glorious liberty of the Children of God." (Rom. 8 18-21).

We know the whole creation has been groaning until now, but we ourselves who have the fruits of the Spirit . . . We have put the soul on its own as the thing that needs redemption and to enjoy God. We are not realising, I think, that angels would be happy that way, but we are not.

# Benefits to many Farmers

(By Mr. W. Mannes, Axe Creek Group)

**The Primary Produce Gift Scheme originated about thirteen years ago in the Terang-Camperdown Region; and, speaking on behalf of every member who has taken an active part in it, I think this Convention should ask the delegates from that region to convey our sincere thanks to those who began the scheme.**

All who have worked in the scheme appreciate it because it brings us closer to people in need and provides us with something to help them.

The scheme operates by members, through their groups or regions, soliciting donations of primary produce of various kinds, so that this can be sold or dispersed to needy people. Accrued funds are available for loans to assist land settlement by those wishing to establish themselves, or those who are going through difficult periods on the land.

### **Handling the stock**

By far the greatest amount of trading carried on by the scheme has been in the form of heifer calves, which are handled in two or three different ways.

In our own (Campaspe) region, which is not a dairying area, we have gone to the dairying districts and asked friends and farmers there to rear calves to weaning age. When those heifers are three months off coming into production we advertise them, setting out the conditions, of which the chief is NEED.

The applications are then considered by the P.P.G.S. Central Committee, and the stock allocated, first on the basis of need, second on the basis of character as recommended by the region, and third—and very important—the chance of the applicant to succeed in his venture. It would be quite foolish to assist someone who did not have a chance of success in the first place.

At one stage in the history of the scheme, I can recall a report that we had 179 head of cattle on hand, so you can see it was quite a sizeable thing from which a considerable amount of money accrued.

When applicants are sorted out and allocations made, the successful applicant fills in a proper Contract of Sale. He pays \$2 on signing the contract, is charged 2 per cent interest, and repayments are made annually over a four-year period. Short of giving the stock away, we do the next best thing!

### **Assets are considerable**

At the present time our assets in the scheme are \$26,000 to \$27,000. That sounds like a lot of money, but it has taken us 13 years to build it.

As I said earlier we had 179 head of stock at one stage; now we have about 10. This is not very good, and we must look into this.

We have had a number of wonderful donations. On two occasions the Salesian Fathers, of Sunbury, donated pedigree Friesian stud bulls, which did a mighty job in herd improvement for people lucky enough to get them.

I think the P.P.G.S. has brought the best out of many people. I recall one drive we had through the northern districts of our region. When we were collecting the calves we found ourselves about 18 miles away from one



donor and our truck was full. We could not get there, so I rang him, and he told me not to worry—we could pick the two calves up when we were ready. We were having some trouble about agistment, and I forgot all about these calves.

A man in our district had lost seven or eight cows through disease, and the group was concerned about him, but we had only young calves six or eight months off production.

Just at the time, my phone rang, and the man I mentioned earlier told me that one of the heifers we had left with him had a calf, and the other was not far off calving.

He suggested that we go and get them. Then I contacted the man who was having trouble with his herd; we went up and collected the heifers we had forgotten. Their value was \$208, and we allocated them. The man who had held them so long was typical of the type of people who help us to help someone in need.

Another case I recall was of a man in the Western District who was very interested in getting on the land. The local group went to a lot of trouble to help him financially and in other ways, including getting a block. He was only working for wages, and the P.P.G.S. did not have any money at the time.

So an N.C.R.M. member bought a mob of sheep, put them on the property, and then handed the business to the P.P.G.S., saying that we could take it from there—he didn't want anything for it.

### Operating the cash loans

As the money from the stock comes in, it is loaned for fencing, provision of water supply, clearing or anything to do with the development of existing farms. There was a case in Gippsland of an application for \$1000 by a man who did not have enough stock on his farm.

We loaned him the \$1000, and because he had that extra money Gippsland and Northern supplied him with enough stock to get by. That put the farmer in business, and he is now negotiating for the purchase of that farm.

That is one of the many success stories. We have made mistakes, of course; but the only people who have never made mistakes are those who have never tried to do anything.

The Cash Loans side of the P.P.G.S. is handled by the payment of 4 per cent interest (the best on the market), and the period of the loan varies according to circumstances.

If the region is sure that the borrower is in real difficulty when payments are due, an extension of time is given. Unfortunately, in this section we have a few outstanding accounts, but that is common to all businesses—though ours is really not a business, nor is it a charitable institution. I think the reason why some accounts are unpaid is because the regional officers have not supervised the situation properly, or kept in close personal touch.

The men who have stock or loans from us were in the position where they could not get money from anyone else. Their security was that they knew someone in the region, not that they had money in their pockets, or property. The group or the region was prepared to guarantee these men; that was good enough for us and we gave them real help.

A number of allocations have been made to non-Catholics. If a man was in need, that was all we wanted to know about him, provided his character and his chances of success were right.

By the same token, quite a number of non-Catholics have assisted us greatly in the P.P.G.S. That is the sort of thing we want in the atmosphere that has been created the past few years. Non-Catholics can take an ever-increasing part in supplying us with stock and in obtaining help through the scheme.

(Following Mr. Mannes' address, the Convention went on to discuss the P.P.G.S. Constitution prepared for consideration and amendment.)

# THE DECREE ON THE LAITY

(By Rev. Father N. Duck, Wagga, N.S.W.)

**The Decree On The Laity is a document now available, and I hope every lay person here has acquired a copy because it is your charter.**

It was the second last Decree to be passed by the Council, and one of the most contentious. I think the original document presented to the Council would be completely unrecognisable when compared with the final Decree; nevertheless, it was voted in its final form by over 2,000 votes to two.

The laity, in other documents, are defined as being all the people of God, excluding the Hierarchy, the Clergy and the Religious. So, quite clearly, we are dealing with you people here—the laity.

An apostle is somebody who is sent to do special work, and in the very introduction to the Decree, the Council asked the laity to remember they are God's apostles by the very fact of their Christian vocation. The Church cannot be without their apostolate.

### What is the Lay Apostolate?

Chapter One of the Decree aims to answer the question: What is the Lay Apostolate and what is the vocation of the laity in the Church and in the world?

In answer to that, the Decree states that the Church was so founded that all the world could find a proper relationship with Christ, to share in His redemption to the eternal glory of God. It says, too, that every action of the Mystical Body towards this objective is to be termed 'apostolic.'

The lay Christian is the Mystical Body in the world, and the lay Christian must carry the concerns of Christ into the concerns of the world, so that temporal affairs of the world will be inspired by the teachings of the Gospel, so that all things in the world will learn to live as God has planned. To enable him to do this, the lay Christian has received his vocation in Baptism, his strength in the sacrament of Confirmation, and the continuing food of the other Sacraments, particularly of the Blessed Eucharist, which are needed to feed the life of charity which is to be the soul of his apostolate.

By God's own commandment of charity, the Christian has a responsibility to be a messenger of God, an apostle. It is not a matter of whether he feels like it or not; it is a responsibility, and to do this work the laity must work with their brothers, the hierarchy, the clergy and religious. The lay Christian should live with the liturgy and with its spirit; he should carry out all his other duties patiently and correctly.

Remember, it is more important to please God than to please men, and he should gladly suffer injustice himself rather than act unjustly. You will remember Our Lord's words: 'If anyone will come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me.'

So, the lay Christian will be as perfect in his profession and in his daily work, in his family life, in his civic responsibilities as he can be; always honest, always sincere, always kind and always courageous.

Then, in the last words of this Chapter One, the Decree holds up as a perfect model the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Queen of the Apostles.

### Aims and objectives

Chapter Two brings in the aims and objectives of the lay apostolate: It is the plan of God to save all, and that means to save all men and things He has created—the 'whole Temporal Order', as it is referred to. The whole temporal order where men live must be fully one in the proper relationship with Christ.



So that, whilst the layman is both a Christian and a citizen, he is only one person and his life is one, and the world he lives in is one. The true apostle will always be looking out for opportunities to apply in this world in which he lives the Gospel teaching. He will teach by his example, and also by his word wherever possible.

The Decree points out that many times wrong turnings have been taken in the world because the layman who was there did not know the Christian answer to the problems presented.

Then the Decree is directed to the laity to take up as their own special obligation and special task this restoration of the whole temporal order. Our Lord said: "What you do for the least of My Brethren you do for Me." He said: "By this will all men know you are my disciples if you have love one for another."

The Decree points out that Christian social action is a pre-eminent part of this work in the temporal order, so that the Christian apostle will be interested in every one of the things that concern the lives of his fellow-men as well as himself. Working conditions and wages, hours, health schemes, pensions, education, every aspect of life will be his interest. He will remember that the neighbour for whom he works is a brother of Christ, the image of God . . . And so, the layman will take the initiative and not wait to be pushed into these things.

Chapter Two ends by saying: "The laity should hold in the highest esteem the works of charity and projects of social assistance, public or private, including international programmes whereby effective help has been given to many individuals and nations. In so doing, they should co-operate with men of goodwill . . ."

These words are a paraphrase of one of the sentences of the Constitution of the National Catholic Rural Movement. In the general objectives drawn up in April, 1956, it was stated that the Rural Movement would collaborate with other people or organisations advocating such methods to assist in the reconstruction of rural life.

### Fields of the Apostolate

Chapter Three turns to the fields in which the apostolate is to be exercised. It gives six: In the Church, in the family, youth and society, social affairs, national and international fields. The Decree points out that from the very beginning of the Church the laity always did participate in the works of the Church.

Catechists, parish and diocesan organisations, particularly such as the Legion of Mary and many others, are doing this work in our own time today.

The Council points out that the family is one of the most essential of the fields for the exercise of the apostolate of the laity in the modern world of today. The family is so much under attack—divorce for example, eroding it all the time. So the family apostolate is activity within the family itself; the build-up of the prayer of the family; the participation in the Liturgy of the family as a whole; the preparation for marriage where family members can participate; the assistance of families in moments of crisis; and particularly the example of stability in an unstable world are all essential.

Great emphasis is placed on the situation of youth in the apostolate today. The Council points out that young people are the natural companions of other young people.

It says that youth has great reserves of natural energy; but it should not be cut away from the other parts of the apostolate and the other parts of the Church . . . There should be a mutual respect and a mutual relationship between various age groups; but old people should not expect to find old heads on young shoulders, and young people should not expect to find young heads on old shoulders; but there will be dialogue between them.

Society is the complex of customs and laws in which we live; at which we must look to see if it is Christian. The Christian apostle, by his example in everyday work, in his leisure—wherever he participates in the life of the

rest of the world—and this applies to children and adults—can have a wonderful effect on others.

Turning to national affairs, the Rural Movement, by its very nature, has aimed at participation in these. The Decree asks the laity never to shrink from the acceptance of nomination and election to positions of authority if they have the qualifications and if they find themselves supported.

### The Apostolate of the Laity

Chapter Four forms the Apostolate of the laity. Here, there is a great deal of emphasis on the individual apostolate. We have seen in the writings of Pope Pius XI and Pope Pius XII the emphasis was on the organised lay apostolate; but here, though that is not excluded by any means, there is a great deal of emphasis placed on the participation of the lay apostle as an individual in the whole apostolate of the Church in the world.

Wherever he is, whether he is in a group or working alone, the first thing the Council begs of the layman is that he be truly a Christian, that he be full of the charity of Christ. "Without Me, you can do nothing," Our Lord said.

The Council Fathers, some of whom came from the persecuted areas, pointed out that there are some parts of the world in which the Church is not able to organise at all, either through restrictions or the isolation of its members. Therefore, there was a great need for the individual apostolate.

But the Decree goes on to state that God has created man as a social being; that He Himself created an organisation, a group activity — the Church itself. It is natural to human beings to act in groups; therefore, the group apostolate is of the very nature of man. Our Lord said: "Wherever there are two or three gathered together in My Name, there I am in the midst of them."

In Paragraph 19 of this chapter of the Decree, we come first to a number of associations for the laity and the right of the laity to form and join other groups, always in proper relationship with the authority of the Hierarchy. There should be no overlapping by the introduction of new forms of organisations already in existence, or by keeping in existence of organisations that have already outlived their usefulness.

### Question of Catholic Action

In the next paragraph, we come to the tremendously important question of Catholic Action officially and strictly so-called.

This is a point where I would ask you to read and consider very carefully. I will read just a few of the paragraphs concerned because I would not dare paraphrase them. "Various kinds of activities and societies, while maintaining a closer union with the Hierarchy, pursue and continue to pursue goals which are properly apostolic. Of these associations, or even among similar and older institutions, those are specially noteworthy which follow different methods of operation and yet produce excellent results for Christ's Kingdom. These societies were deservedly recommended and promoted by the Popes and many Bishops. From them they received the title of Catholic Action, and were often described as the collaboration of the laity in the Apostolate of the Hierarchy. Whether these forms of the apostolate have the title of Catholic Action or some other title, they exercise an apostolate of great value for our times and consist in the combination and possession of the following four characteristics:

"The immediate aim of an organisation of this kind is the apostolic aim. It is the evangelisation and sanctification of men and the formation of a Christian conscience among them so that they can infuse the Gospel into various communities and departments of life

Two: "Co-operating with the Hierarchy in their own way, the laity contributes the benefits of their experience to, and assumes the responsibility for the direction of, the organisation—the consideration of the conditions in which the pastoral activities of the Church are to be conducted and the elaboration and execution of the plan of things to be done

"The third: The laity must act together in the manner of an organised



body so that the community of the Church is more fittingly symbolised and the apostolate rendered more effective.

"Fourthly: Whether they offer themselves spontaneously or are invited to action and the direct co-operation of the Apostolate of the Hierarchy, the laity function under the higher direction of the Hierarchy itself, and the latter can sanction this co-operation by an explicit mandate.

"Organisations in which, in the opinion of the Hierarchy, the ensemble of these characteristics is realised must be considered to be Catholic Action, even though they take on various forms and titles because of the needs of different peoples and regions."

That particular section of Chapter Four will certainly be one that will need a great deal of consideration and clarification, either here at this meeting, at the Executive Committee, by the Episcopal Chairman or by the Hierarchy's Committee on Catholic Action.

### **Form of Association**

The Council moves on to recommend this form of association—what we have known in the past as the official Catholic Action body; but it also commends all associations of the lay apostolate, with a special reminder of those which the Hierarchy had particularly praised or commended.

Chapter Five deals with relationships within the apostolate. The relationship between all forms of the apostolate must be the fullest co-operation under the Hierarchy, and this will vary with various undertakings; but the particular rule is set down that the name "Catholic" may not be used without the express consent of the lawful ecclesiastical authority.

This part of the Decree reminds us that the Hierarchy are entitled to direct and promote some particular project of an immediate spiritual nature, and in these special cases they are said to give them a mandate.

The laity must be given the greatest possible freedom to act on their own initiative; where the work is of a specifically spiritual nature and belongs properly to the Hierarchy, the control of the Hierarchy must be immediate and complete. Where the field is something that belongs properly to the laity (that is, the temporal order) the place of the Hierarchy is to guide the consciences of the laity to teach and interpret the moral principles that apply in the particular problem in which they are engaged.

The Decree expressly mentions the need for this relationship of brothers; it urges that priests should be particularly selected and trained for participation in work with the lay apostolate.

Another point here is the setting up of "lay councils", which are urged not only in dioceses but in parishes. Such a special secretariat was suggested and has already begun to be implemented in Rome. It will act as a sort of clearing-house of ideas.

### **Importance of training**

Chapter Six—and last—is one that the Rural Movement has always regarded as of great importance. It deals with the training of the lay apostle. I think that this matter is one which has attracted a great deal of discussion at past meetings of the Rural Movement. There will still be discussion. We have to go on training, not only as children, in our family and in school, but all through our life. We are reminded that the fellow who regards himself as finished is finished.

Knowledge of the Scriptures and the study of Christian Doctrine are especially pointed to as being urgent in the training of the apostle . . . Now the Decree closes, as I will, with the appeal addressed to all the laity, especially the young. We have emphasised the position of youth in the apostolate; and it is up to us to implement these two things: Training and, especially, the training of the young.

I would like to leave you with the final words that should ring in the ears of everyone engaged in the apostolate. It is this quotation from St. Paul in Corinthians: "Labour for Him is never in vain."

## **Two tasks for the Rural Movement**

(Public address by Mr. B. A. Santamaria in St. Kilian's Hall)

**The programme of this Convention makes it clear that the central purpose is to bring the ideas in the Second Vatican Council to bear upon the lay apostolate in Australia generally, and the Rural Movement in particular.**

Perhaps I may look at the same organisation in a different way. I acted as a kind of foster father to it from the time it was born in August, 1939, until it reached its manhood on its 21st birthday. I have followed it since with all the affection and concern a foster-father feels for his adopted son once he reaches manhood and there seems little more he can do for him. There may still be some value in a few reflections projected from this background.

One such idea is that of an historian, Oliver. It seemed to me when I first read it a true judgment on the life of organisations; it seems even more true today. This is the phrase: "The idea breeds the organisation; the organisation kills the idea."

There is so much truth in Oliver's cautionary phrase that we will look at the Rural Movement from that standpoint: to examine the original idea out of which the organisation grew and ask ourselves how far the idea is relevant to the realities of a world 30 years later and to analyse the organisation's capacity to adapt itself to the evolution of circumstances within that period.

The Rural Movement grew out of the spiritual idea of charity (in the proper meaning of the term), the central kernel of the Christian Faith applied to the central problem of its own day—the problem of urbanisation.

### **Consequences of Urbanisation**

Today the fatal consequences of urbanisation are beginning to be appreciated by the sociologist, the town planner, the psychiatrist, the pastor and the theologian as cities choke up with traffic; as hours spent in irrational travel between job and home deprive children of their parents' love, attention and supervision; as the constitutional fabric of the family weakens; and as religious bonds weaken once the fabric of the family has gone.

A fortnight ago the American magazine "Time" carried a cover story entitled "Is God Dead?", speaking of the crisis of faith of modern men. It quoted Father John Courtenay Murray, the eminent Jesuit theologian as saying: that the central question facing modern theologians is: "whether or not a contemporary industrial civilisation can construct a symbol that can help us to understand God."

It is a necessary task; but I cannot recollect an historical situation in which religion has flourished once the family has broken down as a functioning institution. This is precisely what urbanisation has done to the family and what it does to religion.

The Rural Movement foresaw this 30 years ago and proposed to do something about it. This did not make it popular; but the truth remained the truth; the community's failure to follow the truth is being borne out today, and it will be borne out with increasing pain and loss in the years to come.



## Charity the essential idea

The essential idea of the Rural Movement, as an organisation of the lay apostolate, was that Charity—the central concept of the Christian faith—compelled its members to regard themselves as responsible for meeting a problem more fundamental than any other.

By definition, charity is the love of God expressed in the love of the neighbour... Who is my neighbour? How do I bring my love to bear upon my neighbour? Love is the articulation of three ideas; I have personal responsibility, the responsibility has the force of obligation, the obligation is to serve.

Who is my neighbour? The parable of the Good Samaritan is the clearest expression of the truth that my neighbour is every man—irrespective of race, colour or creed.

It was this spirit we tried to bring to bear on all of the problems resulting from urbanisation fully 30 years ago; but it was one of the merits of the Rural Movement that it did not leave matters at that point.

Obviously, left at that point the individual, however powerfully affected by the Rural Movement's central idea, would acknowledge himself to be helpless before the immensity of the problem.

So we set out to refine the concept of charity and make it understood by education. Our members could understand that it was charity to visit the home of a poor family bringing material assistance, to look after the children of a neighbour stricken down with illness, to take in a neighbour's crop in the event of death or incapacitation.

But in a civilisation far more complex than that of the rural township it might well be a more developed form of charity to fight hard in the field of civic affairs to win higher rates of pensions and child endowment, and co-operatives in housing and rural credit. These fields of action previously the province of the politician must become the fields of action for those who had no political ambitions at all.

A successful step taken here would serve tens of thousands of people, most of whom had never heard of their benefactor, whereas the individual act of charity affected only the individual — which is not to say that it was spiritually of lower grade.

You cannot bring about justice between the social classes, one aspect of which is the "welfare state", we cannot attack the problem of urbanisation, without legislation. Equally, you cannot achieve the necessary legislative reforms without political action. In theory, at least, the Rural Movement has faced the reality squarely in the face: you simply cannot tackle the problem of the flight of population not only from the land, but from regional towns to the great city without political action.

## Energising all Christians

That is why, in concept at least, the Rural Movement has sought to energise country people—not only Catholics but all Christians—to play an active part in all political parties, to be the best and most active members of primary producer organisations and why it has offered facilities of research and organisation, without which they cannot be successful in their specialised work.

The Rural Movement has accepted these propositions as the basic theory of action. Many individual members have been singularly effective—but only as individuals. As a movement I believe we have been singularly ineffective for reasons which I may have time to enter into later.

To summarise these ideas which are basic to the Rural Movement's picture of ends and means:

- (1) Charity is the heart of the Christian Faith; It means responsibility taken to the level of a binding obligation to serve the neighbour. The neighbour is everyman irrespective of race, colour or creed.
- (2) In the 20th century more can be done to bring substantial help to masses of men, whether in Australia, Asia or Africa, by concerted action to affect the social and political order than can be done by

individual acts of charity, although the latter are still absolutely essential. This action in the social and political order, whether it is to limit the size of cities or to expand the Colombo Plan, demands legislation. This cannot be achieved without political action.

- (3) The organisation of the Rural Movement exists to facilitate achievement of these ideas. It should have adequate research and training facilities to "service" those active in the field who share in its ideas. In "servicing" them it should not distinguish between Catholic, Protestant, Jew or agnostic so long as they are basically ready to work for the same pattern of policies.

It is only this modern up-to-date refinement and application of the idea of Christian charity which makes the Christian faith meaningful in the turbulent 20th Century. The "charity of Christ", being founded in belief in God, the source of all obligation to others, makes sense; the secular charity of mere commitment, mere involvement, makes little sense at all, ultimately leading the most logical of its devotees to new and blood-thirsty gods, instead of the Christian God of Love.

As I understand it, that is essentially what the Rural Movement is all about. Anyone who reads what the Vatican Council says on the laity and the lay apostolate can have no doubt this is one of the types of work the Church wants laymen to undertake—and when I say undertake, I mean "undertake in practice", not merely "talk about in theory."

## Two tasks for N.C.R.M.

There are two major works I believe to fall specifically and particularly into the field of the Rural Movement, because it is transparent that they need to be done, because they quite obviously fall within the field of rural and regional interest, and because there is no other body within the Church either fitted or likely to take them on.

These two tasks are first to bring about an organic plan of decentralisation, and second to fashion Australia's policies on overseas aid and trade along lines which reconcile our moral obligations with our national interests, and equally our national interests with our moral obligations.

Even to mention decentralisation almost convicts me of the dishonesty which attaches to its common and frequent political usage. However often it is referred to, it is quite clear that no one has any serious intention of doing anything about it.

The Australian problem has not reached the calamitous dimensions of the galloping urbanisation in the underdeveloped countries, David Owen, co-administrator of the U.N. Development Programme, has pointed out that the city populations in these countries have grown by 60 per cent in the 1950's. In Latin America today, the city population grows at twice the rate of the population of the continent itself—no joke for countries with little or no economic development.

Those who have seen the indescribable shanty towns around cities of any size in South-East Asia will understand what is happening through exaggerated urbanisation in the under-developed world. The result is already disaffection, disorder, violence and hatred. It is impossible to believe that the ultimate development will not be uncontrollable revolutionary turmoil.

The Australian problem is nothing like this. It is serious but can still be handled.

Yet it is surely absurd that in a population of a little over 11 million, so many million are concentrated in four capital and four provincial cities on our eastern coastline. It is absurd to envisage that within 10 years the population of Melbourne, Yallourn and Geelong will grow to 3,400,000, and within 25 years to over 4,670,000. If it is true that the capital investment needed per person is \$6,000, the investment in the increase of these cities by 1976 will be over \$6,000,000,000 and by 1990, \$14,500,000,000. How many towns of 150,000 could be established with this investment?

Sydney and Melbourne are growing at the rate of 50,000 people a year. Yet, as Dr. Neutze points out, from the traffic viewpoint alone "each new resident will cause an increase of traffic congestion to present



residents costing \$65 in Sydney but only \$4 in Wollongong and 20 cents in Wagga." Sydney alone is in course of spending \$154 million in the immediate future simply to dilate its traffic arteries.

At the Lord Mayor's conference in 1965, it was estimated that the six capital cities will need to spend over \$6 billion in 10 years to solve their traffic problems; Melbourne, to get the additional water supply it will need in 12 years, has to spend six times as much per 1,000 gallons as it does today . . . And yet we are told that decentralisation is uneconomic.

The Rural Movement should be well aware of the quite parlous defence aspect of the present centralisation of Australia's population. Ten years ago at our Canberra Convention, the Professor of Nuclear Physics at the National University, Professor E. W. Titterton, said quite openly: "The only effective civil defence against atomic attack is the dispersal of cities, industry and population over a wide area. There is no possibility of rebuilding existing cities to withstand hydrogen bomb attacks."

There are two other consequences of excessive urbanisation with which we are already familiar.

### Disparity of birth-rates

The disparity of birth-rates between the metropolitan cities, provincial towns and country areas proper is of clear significance to Australia, especially since the contraceptive "pill" began to ravage our population prospects. In 1963, the birth-rate per 1000 in Melbourne was 20.69, in Bendigo 21.3, in Geelong 22, in the Western District 22.4, in the Mallee 25.6. The difference is especially significant for a country like Australia.

A decline in the influence of religion accompanies urbanisation. More significant than all is the total alienation of the young from a mass society in which they have no part. The excesses of the Berkeley section of the University of California with the cult of filthy speech, sexual perversion, narcotics and anti-Vietnam demonstrations has created a pattern of nihilism which is spreading throughout the Anglo-Saxon world; and we have seen the first beginnings in Australia. The essential cause, I am certain, is that the young are alienated from an urban world in which, because of its very immensity and anonymity, the individual no longer counts.

Excessive urbanisation is the central evil of our times. This essential evil lies in its destruction of the human person, the basic unit of the family as a functioning meaningful institution, the small and medium-sized community in which the human person still counts.

If we work on this problem we should not underestimate the magnitude of the task. The financial interests opposed to the change are enormous. To them vast urbanisation spells a ready-made market so placed that it can be covered by mass media advertising.

Political obstacles reflect the financial; for distribution of electorates in the Commonwealth and States still gives some weight to country seats apart from a population basis, but the bulk of the electorates are in the cities. Cabinets are made or broken according to the disposition of the seats.

The task is herculean but not hopeless as long as there is a sufficient group sufficiently determined on a sufficiently radical programme which will check the establishment of industries in cities over a certain size.

The positive aim needs to be the building up of selected existing towns until they have a population of over 100,000, which will justify the establishment of a university and its subsidiary educational institutions. What needs to be aimed at negatively is, either by direct prohibition or the imposition of a sufficiently heavy land tax, to prevent the establishment of industries in towns over a certain size.

There is nothing necessarily uneconomic in such a programme. In his important recent study "Economic Policy and the Size of Cities", Dr. C. M. Neutze established that any further industrial concentration in Sydney and Melbourne would be detrimental to the local economy.

As Dr. Coombs, Governor of the Reserve Bank, said many years ago: There is no earthly reason why a decentralist programme should not be undertaken in Australia. It is not knowledge of technique which is lacking. If private capital is no longer permitted to be invested in industries in towns over a certain size while public capital goes to the development of the environment of new towns, the rest will ultimately follow.

### These things are lacking

What is lacking is the will, the determination to work hard for long years, the research, getting the support of organisations and interests in country and urban areas, the development of political programmes and pressures, the exploitation of all available issues—road traffic, water shortages, distance from work—which inevitably arise as cities become more unliveable.

Somebody must do this work. In my view that body is the Rural Movement. If it does not pioneer the solutions to this problem of Australia's internal structure, nobody else will. I have always believed in the effectiveness of purely marginal power of which the D.L.P. and N.C.C. are outstanding exponents. By cleaving fast to their ideas, working away at them efficiently, they have created new factors in the fields of defence and foreign affairs which suddenly and unexpectedly fall into place.

Others obtain the credit; but they have done the work.

Touching on the second problem, there is one supremely important task in which the basic work cannot be done by city organisations, in which it will not be done by primary producer organisations unless their support is won by active work.

Today there is a radically different situation in relation to export surpluses in wheat of major producing countries. In the past year, the American Administration has made two discoveries. As the result of its own enormous aid to India in particular, and the fact that a large part of the world surplus has been absorbed because of the stagnant agriculture of Communist countries, the first American discovery has been that the bins are pretty empty.

The second discovery has been that the availability of wheat surpluses has become an important weapon of policy, both in peace-making between India and Pakistan and in giving some direction to India's economy. This policy use of wheat surpluses calls for the utmost diplomacy, but it is certainly not beyond the wit of our community.

I believe that, for many years ahead, there will be heavy shortages of cereal grains in countries like India, the Philippines, Indonesia—our potential or actual allies. There is everything to be said in Australia for policies of expanded wheat and rice production within the limits of good husbandry. The surpluses can be purchased by the Commonwealth on the lines of the American Administration's purchases over the years; and distributed as economic aid to the countries mentioned as need dictates and opportunity offers.

The foreign currency accumulated can be vested in joint companies operated by local and Australian organisations like an expanded CSIRO and under joint control devoted to agricultural and industrial technique improvements in the recipient countries so that ultimately they can become self-sufficient. In the meantime, we should seek international agreement with all Western exporting countries in relation to exports to Russia and China.

### Forcing a policy change

If Red China, for instance, insists in continuing along the path of aggression she should be faced with the withholding of wheat and other supplies until her policy changes.

This export policy would encourage greater cereal production which the farmer could sell to an administration like the Colombo Plan; we could satisfy the hunger of nations like India; the resultant income would be left in the countries concerned to improve methods of production; and joint



operation would make up some of the deficiencies of their administration. Tighter international policies towards the export of cereals to China would at one and the same time force the Communists to make greater concessions to their own peasants and cause them to take a harder look at aggression and its consequences.

As I said in relation to the work of decentralism in Australia, someone must pioneer these solutions to Australia's activities abroad. If the Rural Movement does not do so, I do not see who will.

There is no reason to believe that this cannot be done by the initiative of a small efficient organisation.

As Professor Sibnarayan Ray, of the Department of Indian Studies in the University of Melbourne, pointed out in his "Bulletin" article (March 20, 1965), the first gift of 150,000 tons of wheat to India last year was won exclusively by the activities of the "Wheat for India" campaign, with which we were not unconnected.

As Professor Ray said, the resistance was formidable: "Resistance to this proposal", he wrote, "ranged from official inertia and indecision through commercial reluctance to disengage from an established market (even though this might leave the country open to political blackmail) to Left Wing ideological hostility to any programme that involved explicit commitment against Communism . . ."

Despite all of this we won through in the end, although the campaign was one for which we did not make a major effort. I have no doubt that a major effort undertaken by the Rural Movement and associated organisations could re-orient national policy, offer a flourishing market to wheat farmers and others, make the wheat industry an agent for the fulfilment of our moral obligations to deficit nations in South-East Asia—and even to China if she will abandon the path of aggression; while bringing us closer to India, Indonesia and the Philippines, our natural allies.

While we embrace the dual task, we cannot forget the basic truth which Ozanam taught: that it is only the constant performance of small-scale acts of personally involved service which will keep our motives pure.

If we keep our ideas clear, our organisation efficient, our motives pure, there is nothing we cannot achieve for our country as Australians and to give a living testimony to the power of Christ as His humble friends and followers.



## The Scope and Necessity for Asian Aid

(Below are extracts from the introductory remarks by Rev. Fr. R. D. Markey, Maryborough, Vic., to his illustrated address to delegates, representatives of various organisations, senior students of secondary schools and members of the public, in St. Kilian's hall.)

**I cannot think of any of the major countries of South-East Asia where the Rural Movement does not have an interest; and, as you will see tonight, that interest is very extensive.**

The aim of the Rural Movement is to "restore Christ to the Countryside and the Countryside to Christ" — to bring Christ's social teachings into action. The benefits of the Rural Movement go to everyone in the country. There is no distinction made between race, colour and creed; the services of the Rural Movement are there for everybody, and that aim is carried into the countries you will see on the slides tonight.

The theme of this Convention is "The Lay Apostolate and the N.C.R.M."; and, in the light of this, we are reviewing the past year and looking to the years ahead, so that we can build up our Movement and draw others into the work and then to consider our problems. We face local, national and international problems, and we are trying to do something about these.

Older members of the Rural Movement will remember that the N.C.R.M. was one of the pioneers in Australia of the idea that, as a nation, we have the responsibility to our hungry neighbours in the North and in South-East Asia.

When we first put that idea forward we were condemned as fools and dreamers, and even as late as 1958 the idea was condemned by eminent people. Now, of course, it is accepted by everybody. This is "Christian charity in action", as we put it.

The year 1958 is memorable because the theme of our Convention that year was "Asia" — studying the problems of Asia in relation to Australia. Some of the things you will see tonight had their origin in the Convention.

In that year and the following years we brought people into this country who understood the problems of Asia, including Archbishop Yu-pin, of the Catholic University, Taiwan and Archbishop of Nanking before the Communists took over the Chinese mainland. He addressed our Convention in Warrnambool in 1960, and we learned a lot from him.

A little later we brought out Shoy Lall, of whose work we will see something tonight.

An Indian farmer, who was interested in agriculture and had enough money to experiment to try to build up agriculture in his country, we had him with us for six months touring Australia to see how things work here.

Speaking of these food and agricultural problems, some people wonder why we do not leave these to the Government, because they are so immense. We know that they must be tackled by Governments. We have all heard of the work of the United States, the Colombo Plan and the Food and Agricultural Organisation of the United Nations. Something more than they are doing is needed for several reasons.

Aid given by voluntary organisations, or even private individuals (though it may be small) can be quite effective, and in some cases very effective and essential. That is, essential in one way because it fills the gaps left by the Government schemes: it is also essential to the giver, to the one who gives this aid, because we know it is our duty as Christians, and then as thanksgiving for our own plenty.

No doubt, all of us here have found plenty to eat today — and none



of us stopped eating because there was nothing more to eat. In the countries we will see tonight the lucky ones get two meals a day; but most of them who are not so lucky will get less. Pope John had something to say about that. He said the wealthy nations have an obligation to help the poor nations. In saying that he was echoing what has echoed down the ages from Christ Our Lord himself.

Another reason why we should give this voluntary aid—which is our main interest tonight — is that it has the advantage over Government aid. It is both personal and immediate; it is practical because it can do things Government aid so often cannot do; it is immediate because all, or very nearly all, of the money that is contributed goes to the people concerned — the people needing help. There is very little overhead and less opportunity for corrupt officials to syphon the money off into their own pockets . . . .

(Fr. Markey's talk, illustrated by slides of people he met and places he visited during his tour last year, covered the Philippines, Hong Kong, Macao, Taiwan and India. He showed and explained something of what the N.C.R.M. and other organisations had done in Asian Aid, and illustrated the need for continuation and expansion of the work.)

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## Episcopal Chairman's Charge to the Rural Movement

**"I wish to thank Bishop Henschke for his leadership of the Rural Movement over all the years, but particularly in these last few years when for him it must have become an increasing burden. I thank him for the encouragement and the challenge he has given me," Bishop Warren said in his closing address to the Convention.**

"To my mind the Convention has been very successful. I have learned a tremendous amount, not only about the specific aims of the Rural Movement but on wider subjects that have been so ably handled here during this week. I thank the speakers and trust that their labour will bear much fruit, particularly those clerical speakers who, whatever may be said about Lay or Catholic Action, are the basis of success of what is necessarily a spiritual movement.

### Encouragement to youth

We have heard a great deal about youth, and I want to give youth every encouragement in the development of the Rural Movement. I say that specifically and formally. The only way we can gain continuous success for the Rural Movement will be by swelling its ranks with young people.

I offer you this charge, therefore, that you young and older members do your utmost to encourage the admission of young men and women to the Rural Movement, and give them every help, every consideration and every understanding.

I cannot say enough to thank and encourage the chaplains because, as I have said already they are the cornerstones of our success. The work of the Rural Movement will depend on the work of the chaplains. Already some move has been made to ensure that we have a supply of chaplains for the future; and it has been suggested that chaplains have the opportunity of training some of those who are already priests; and, moreover, that those who are training in seminaries for the priesthood be given the opportunity and the encouragement of knowing about the Rural Movement and its techniques. In that way we will increase its success; without their help it cannot have the success it is desired to have.

Three Bishops have already asked me, as Chairman, to do something for their dioceses in the extension of the Rural Movement—the Bishops of Cairns, Bunbury and Bathurst. They have issued a formal invitation to the Rural Movement. That means that you do something in those areas. It will need a lot of sacrifice, but if the sacrifice is made it will bear great fruit, and give great benefits to the organisation.

The whole root of the Rural Movement and its whole basis and foundation is love of God and of our neighbour; and because of that it is necessary for every member to get more of the love of God and of his neighbour into his soul.

### A spiritual movement

This is primarily a spiritual movement. Just as every approach to our neighbor outside the fold of the Church means that there will be no remission of sin without sacrifice, there will be no advance in grace without prayer. You are people of the Church; you know what you expect of your priests. You expect them to be holy men, primarily, whatever else you may expect them to do about collecting cash, building churches, getting nuns and other teachers for the schools.



The only way a priest can be a holy man, a man of God is by the fervour he has in his heart. Someone has pointed out that "we are all brothers in this work." If Bishops and priests are men of God, you rank and file members are also that because you are their brothers. Remember this: Have just that love of God in your heart that will make you apostolic.

This is written in your Constitution and certainly in your method. You study Christ in the Gospel and you translate Christ into action through your own personality; whether that action is worked on Asians or Timbuctoceans does not matter. It is Christ through you.

As Father Fahey pointed out, it is no longer a question of the body or soul — it is a question of persons. Each one of us makes his contact with another individual on the personal basis; and that is why it is necessary for you not only to be Christians but to be seen to be Christians. It is no good sending cart-loads of wheat to India if people do not know why, or what your motive is.

### **Charity must be manifest**

Your charity, your love of God must be manifest, and it will not be that unless you study the personality of Christ; put Him into your own self and express Him through your personality to your own contacts. That is putting the love of God into practice, and you will not have this love of God—and this is also in your programme—unless you learn to pray.

In your study of the Gospel you do not look so much at the words Christ used or the material things of the Gospel. You are looking for the message of Christ's mind and heart—Himself, His own personality. You put that into yourself, into your own mind and heart, and then you express your own Christian calling. Then you make an impression upon your neighbor—not as any other person, not as a Rotarian, a Jacee or a Lion, but as a Christian.

Believing and acting got through love of God, love of Christ is mirrored through your person. That can only be achieved by your own prayer, by joining your own hearts with the heart of Christ. There is only one place for it: On your knees, above all in the presence of our Sacramental Lord. Your act of worship will be made perfect in the Liturgy and in the Mass.

I ask you to take that to heart. Remember that your Movement is primarily spiritual, for the spiritual good of the ultimate neighbour you will come to for no other reason than that he is a brother of Christ, by right if not in fact; and you are the one to bring that right into fact through your own life.

This will not be merely a vague sort of sentimental love but a real and personal love for Christ translated into a real and personal love of the neighbour you assist. If you cannot love Him your assistance will be material. It will not achieve the aims and objects of the Rural Movement.

### **Attention to prayer**

So I ask you to be more careful about your attention to the Gospels and about your prayer. You must pray frequently yourself, not merely on the group level but individually. Never pass up the opportunity of calling on Our Lord in the Tabernacle, kneeling down close up and putting your heart with His.

In that way you will learn to love. Speak with God, speak with Our Lord, learn what He wants of you, what He wants you to do. Ask His guidance and you will get it. Then you will be successful. Whether or not you are successful in the worldly sense of your trade or profession, you will certainly be successful in the sense that you will bring men to love Christ.

In that way, you will certainly restore Christ to your countryside — not into the bricks and mortar or the fields of grass primarily; but into the persons you meet and live with in your countryside. They will truly mirror Christ once again to the Eternal Father, as you have truly mirrored Christ to them.

## **Early Training and the N.C.R.M.**

**This summary of a group discussion on getting young people into the N.C.R.M. was given by Gilbert Roberts.**

The group I led tackled the question: "Would it not be better for young people to join the Y.C.W. or a similar youth organisation to be trained as future leaders rather than go straight into the N.C.R.M.?"

We all agreed that it would be better for them to do this . . . I, personally, had been associated with the Y.C.W. for about four years. I came from the Y.C.W. to the Rural Movement, and I have always been under the impression that the Y.C.W. is the ideal place for young people to get the idea of meeting procedure and Gospel discussion.

I think that for a young person to go straight into the Rural Movement—by "young" I mean that, perhaps, he would be more suited to the Y.C.W.—is to find that he is not prepared to accept the greater responsibility and the study of the bigger problems in the Rural Movement.

In the Y.C.W. young people study their own immediate problems, and after that study and training they are ready to step straight into the Rural Movement.

One way of getting more Y.C.W. trained young people into the Rural Movement is to organise an address to the Y.C.W. by some experienced Rural Movement member who can talk and knows what he is talking about. He could give a picture of our work and the way we do it. That would get more former Y.C.W. members into the Rural Movement.

You just cannot go out and say: "Look, we want more members. Come in!" If you want to get young people into the Rural Movement you must go out and tell them what it is all about, and make them realise that it is necessary and they have a duty to do.

Perhaps, too, when they learn more of what the Vatican Council said about the added work in fields like this, that could be a help.

To sum up: Our discussion group decided that it would be better for young people to join a youth organisation such as the Y.C.W., get the basic training and techniques, and then come into the Rural Movement.

## **Rural Community Problems**

**These extracts are from leaders' summaries of group discussions which followed the session "Youth in the N.C.R.M.". They touch particularly on the problems of the rural community.**

### **KEVIN FITZGIBBON**

Is there any work or need for the N.C.R.M. in the future now that conditions on the land are good?

The answer to that is "yes". In the first place, we have been told during this Convention that we are here to try to improve ourselves and our neighbors.

One problem is the cost of land. It is very hard for a young man to save money and buy land. It is too dear. We feel that there should be some Government help for young men wanting to get on the land, because they are needed there. Older men, with plenty of capital and other assets behind



them, keep buying up the land, and young men cannot compete against them. Rural community problems will remain much as they are now unless the Government does something to help young men get on the land.

#### BRIAN PACKER

There is no doubt that there is a definite need for the N.C.R.M. in the future, but the emphasis is shifting from conditions to problems associated with these "better conditions on the land".

In the country we seem to be getting fewer education facilities and facilities generally, following the drift of population to the cities. This is posing new problems such as: "What do we do about education? Do we get the Government to subsidise us more to board our children at school? Do we shift into towns where there are schools and work our farms from there?"

#### JOHN CARTY

One problem is the availability of land for farmers' sons, particularly in those families where there is more than one son and it is not possible to divide the farm. It happens, too, that when there is not enough land available for the young people, whole families must go to a place where they can educate the children to the extent it is needed today.

The cost and availability of labour for farms is another problem we must face in the future. It is a complex problem, the over-riding factor being the rising standard of living in the city as against the rising costs in the country.

#### CHARLES BIGNOLD

With the unity of farmers' organisations likely, this could bring about a state of affairs where minority groups are controlled—as has happened in the trade union movement. There is a need to ensure that the right group gets control.



From Griffith, N.S.W.: Mrs. M. Lane, Mrs. Savage and Mr. K. McNamara.